



# B'NAI B'RITH MAGAZINE

THE NATIONAL JEWISH MONTHLY

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FOR THE MINISTRY  
Berkeley California

Volume XLIV, No. 8

MAY, 1930

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# THE B'NAI B'RITH MAGAZINE

*The National Jewish Monthly*

VOLUME XLIV

MAY, 1930

NUMBER 8

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All new subscriptions and all changes in address of subscribers and manuscripts should be sent to the Editor, B'nai B'rith Magazine, 6 Electric Bldg., Cincinnati, Ohio.

Articles bearing the names or initials of the writers thereof do not necessarily express the views of the editors of the B'nai B'rith Magazine on the subjects treated therein.

The B'nai B'rith Magazine goes to members of the order for the nominal sum of fifty cents a year. Non-members pay one dollar a year. Although the magazine is the official organ of the Independent Order of B'nai B'rith, subscription to it is not compulsory. Members who do not desire to receive their magazine may relieve themselves of further subscription payments by sending a statement to that effect to their stationery to the editorial office.

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## *The Quinquennial Convention*

IF WE were the reporter of the quinquennial convention of the B'nai B'rith, held in Cincinnati last week, we would write:

Here were men assembled for no benefit of their own. They had left behind their businesses and professions, laid down the work of the busy day, to go to a meeting that would bring no personal profit to any man.

What summoned them to this devotion? Well, it was the thunder of Sinai still sounding in their ears after 3,000 years; it was the voice of forefathers proclaiming the faith even as they perished for it; it was the light of Inquisition fires illuminating the way of Jewish life that was so good that it was worth dying for.

To these summons they answered. They came to look after the good inheritance, to increase it, to make it even more lovely. They were the Jew at his everlasting task of saving Jewish life for his children.

To this they gave the faithful devotion of priests at an altar. There was the tempting delight of pleasant spring days out of doors, but they were in the convention hall from morning until far into night and none shirked his task. There were Cincinnati friends who tempted them with entertainment during the daylight hours, but it was "No, we must be in the convention hall."

So, if you ask us, "What was the outstanding thing of this convention?" we would answer: It was this devotion, this spectacle of Israel serving Jewish life, this inspiration of men putting aside their daily work to cherish an ancient inheritance.

Though much was done on the convention floor—our news columns testify to that—though there were hours of debate and deliberation, though the proceedings will fill a good-sized book, this glamorous spirit of the undying Israel was the light of the convention.

\* \* \*

## *The Holiday of the Law*

SO THE unique people come again to celebrate the giving of the Law in the holiday which they call Shabuoth. It is significant that it follows immediately the holiday that celebrates liberty.

Though they commemorate events that happened thousands of years ago there is a modern concept to be discovered in the close junction of the two holidays: Liberty and Law are twins. Liberty can not survive without Law. And, indeed, Law that is without Liberty must eventually perish by the will of the people upon whom it is imposed.



Having been set free from slavery, the Jews established the code of social law that is comprehended in the Ten Commandments which may be called the constitution on which the Torah is founded. By this code the new-gained liberty was to be preserved for the enjoyment of all.

Though in the vast time that has elapsed since Sinai, the peoples have upset many systems and tyrannies have fallen and laws have been nullified, this code from Sinai still enjoys the willing acceptance of mankind. Often more honored in the breach, it remains, nevertheless, an everlasting ideal for human attainment.

The statutes of the Torah have been interpreted and modified to accommodate human nature and changing modes of life, but this constitution, these Ten Commandments, stand as the solid, unmoving foundation. True, some of our sophisticates arise occasionally to say: "These Commandments are out of date. We must have a new set to meet the difficulties and ideals of our times."

But, "Thou shalt not kill" outlaws war as completely as a Kellogg treaty; "Thou shalt not covet" contains a good economic and social code of conduct; "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" comprehends all the current gods that are being worshiped to the exclusion of peace and justice and righteousness.

\* \* \*

### **When Judaism is a Pain**

THE rabbi, Mitchell Salem Fisher of New York, was addressing the New Jersey Conference of the National Council of Jewish Women. He said that Jewish women awaken to Jewish life "only when the husband has been denied admission to a golf club or the son discriminated against at college."

He might have said as much of many Jewish men for whom Judaism is not a conscious way of life but rather a pain. They go their forgetful ways, far from the house of Israel. They stand as suppliants at forbidden hotels or hat in hand at the gates of clubs that do not want them. Then, of a sudden, a bucket of cold water is thrown on them from an upper story, and they run back to the house of Israel with lamentations.

They feel Jewish again, but their feeling is only one of pain hurting their vanity. To be a Jew is with them an ache, a suffering that can be healed by some clerk permitting them to register at a hotel from which Jews generally are barred.

We would recommend to them that they try the pleasures of being Jewish, instead of submitting themselves to humiliations that give them pains. Judaism greatly pleases those Jews who think of themselves as heirs of a mighty history, as the sons of men who stood at Sinai, as scions of the oldest of all families, as bearers of shining ideals.

They feel themselves to be a special sort of servant at the common altar because of these ideals which have come down to them through so much travail. They think of Judaism as a social mission and wherever mankind is to be served, there is the altar for the Jew. They walk with high heads anxious only for the good name of the Jew and not in the least concerned with trifles of vanity. Their way of Jewish life has nothing to do with getting by hostile hotel clerks.

For them Judaism is a medium for joyous serving, not a pain.

### **When the Children Grow Up**

THE sophomores who used to carry Mencken's green magazine about as evidence of their intellectual quality, have grown up. Many of them are married and have children and they have come to see that the problems of life are not to be dismissed with the wise-cracking that used to entertain them in Mencken's green magazine.

Even Rotarians, at whom Mencken taught them to laugh hilariously, seem now to be sounder people than Mencken, even though they may lack his intellectual illumination. The Rotarians are seen to be doing decent, gentle services, such as looking after crippled children; to the ex-sophomore grown wise in his generation this appears to be of more permanent value than the ribald laughter of Mr. Mencken.

He has thrown all his stones and hit all the things he doesn't like and his callow champions have become men and women. An iconoclast without stones to throw and without objects to throw at and without a sympathetic audience is played out.

So, this Mencken who had always prided himself on his originality, is seen to pick up a very, very old stone that had been cast about since Haman's time that was soiled by a multitude of dirty hands. He sought as his object an ancient target that has been the favorite mark of all the bigoted Babbitts of all the times.

He threw the well-worn stone of anti-Semitic prejudice at its timeless target. The Jews, he wrote in general effect, were an unpleasant people. He expanded on this with offensive detail. Called to account, he answered by attacking the dead Louis Marshall.

One is sorry for Mencken. Well-endowed, he might have been a light in the world instead of a collegiate fad. Alas! His vogue having passed, this foe of prejudice is detected cultivating the oldest of all the prejudices!

\* \* \*

### **What We Get Out of Drives**

NOW, happily, it is starting again—the Jewish drive. If ever the need for drives comes to an end, we will have to devise a substitute equally as life giving, equally as unifying.

Now, as the Allied Jewish Campaign for \$6,000,000 begins, the Jewry of the land is being awakened renewed consciousness. Let us consider one whom we shall call Mr. A. He might be Mr. B or even C.

Mr. A has not been Jewishly active since the last drive. His Jewish consciousness has been limited to holiday occasions.

But who may be unconscious for long in a people widely scattered and yet so closely akin that the sorrow of a Jew in Poland tugs at the heart of a contented Jew in Los Angeles? We are like those people who walked through a mystic maze but never became lost, one from the other, because they held fast to a silken cord.

So it is that Mr. A going about his business, deep in his own affairs, suddenly gets a call.

"A, we want you on this drive."

"A drive? What drive?"

"That Jewish drive, of course. You are going to help."

It was three years ago that Mr. A got the last call. Now he is awakened again, and he is conscious of



ugging cord. There is serving to do for Jews; there money that Jews must give. Who is permitted long to forget that he is a Jew?

Mr. A is summoned to meetings with other Jews. His hands are filled again with work for Jewish purposes. He feels a unity with his brethren. Jewish life flows in him again as he bends to the tasks of the star.

And so if we give \$6,000,000 for unhappy brethren in Poland and for hopeful brethren in Russia and Palestine, we get in return refreshment for our Jewish life.

\* \* \*

### Re-Classing Jews in Russia

THOSE dour Communists are perceiving that the opinion of mankind is not lightly to be held. If religion was persecuted in Russia, that was none of the business of the world, the leaders said. The world's protest against the Communist attack on synagogues and churches was merely a holy alliance against the Russian experiment, they asserted.

If the brutal practice of declassing hundreds of thousands of former tradesmen, of denying them bread even, shocked the rest of the civilized world, the Soviet leaders replied that that was a domestic issue in which outsiders must not meddle.

But now they are coming to see that even a Communist country can not live isolated from the good opinion of the world. It must respect elementary justice; it must yield deference to those bourgeois virtues which are called kindness and mercy and which can not perceive how a beautiful social state can be created by tyranny.

So in these past weeks the Soviet leaders have exhibited a becoming charity to individuals and institutions whom they regard as hostile to their deals. The hot pursuit of religion has been tempered to mildness and at Passover official orders practically put a stop to the vicious assault on the *Pesach* feast.

And now a further condescension is observed: Three hundred former Jewish tradesmen who had been declassified, have been restored, at least, to the right to eat, the right to leave at peace, the right to be healed when they are sick, the right to education.

A gentle Russia will be far more powerful in the world than a truculent one—a thing the rapt prophets of communism have had difficulty learning.

\* \* \*

### What the Census is Showing

SO THE East Side ghetto of New York is being depopulated, according to the census-takers. There is an exodus in progress from the old oppression of vile tenement houses, and in another generation the East Side ghetto will be only sentiment, its old ugliness even glamorous in the distance. Indeed, already there are associations of former East Side boys who once a year like to hold reunions in the sickly purlieus of their youth.

The depopulation of this ghetto is the inspiring testimony of social improvement, of the desire to provide the children with a better life than the parents had, of the willingness to make sacrifices to this end; for it costs much more to live in fresh air and sunlight.

Dumped into this misery, the inhabitants are lift-

ing themselves out by the bootstraps. If we honor pioneers who conquered a wilderness, we may not withhold our respect for the achievement of men who beat their way out of a crushing environment to a finer life.

In this connection the figures on Jewish immigration are interesting. The immigration laws are designed, in part, as barriers against East European Jews, and to that end they have served. These Jews are considered undesirable in a land that is ambitious to possess a wholesome, home-building, home-loving, achieving population.

So, it is revealed, that there has been a heavy diminution of the number of Jews admitted to the United States since 1924 when the present immigration laws were enacted. In the five years between 1919 and 1924, 286,560 Jews entered the United States as immigrants, according to Dr. Herman Frank in the *Jewish Tribune*. This was 10.4 per cent of the total immigration. But between the years 1924 and 1929, only 54,862 Jews were let in; this is only 4.88 per cent of the total.

The Jewish groups that our laws bar as undesirable are of the blood and bone of these East Side Jews who, breaking through a wretched environment, establishing better homes, desiring for their children better opportunity than they themselves enjoyed, exemplify the American ideal.

\* \* \*

### Old Prejudices in a New World

"OUR fathers would feel aggrieved if they would see Christians and non-Christians sitting together in counsel," said the Archbishop George Gauthier of Montreal. The good archbishop was addressing the multitude on the matter of the Jews having schools of their own in Montreal.

In the Province of Quebec there is no public school system, and education has been altogether in the hands of the Catholics and the Protestants, each group conducting its own schools.

Now when the Jews became numerous in the city of Montreal they considered it was time to have representation on the Protestant school board; 12,000 of their children were attending the Protestant schools. When representation was refused, the Jews asked for permission to establish schools of their own, and this the legislature granted them over the protest of the cardinal of Quebec and the archbishop of Montreal.

The archbishop was sad to see the Catholic government officials of Montreal consulting with Jews to bring this about; therefore, his lament.

If the archbishop directed his eyes across the Canadian boundary line he would be grieved even more by what he would see. His old eyes would be scandalized by the sight of Jews and Catholics consulting together in many places. He would see rabbis and priests breaking bread at good will dinners. He would observe Catholic and Jew uniting for causes of the social good and Jews and Catholics serving together in public enterprises, and neither group seeking the advantage of the other. A few years ago he could have seen a Jew—Louis Marshall—arguing before the United States Supreme Court against the constitutionality of a law that would have abolished parochial schools in a certain state.





David Goldberg

## I.



EVSEKZIA" is the name of the Jewish Section of the Communist Party in Sovietland, recently liquidated after a painfully memorable career of nearly a decade.

Though dead, and bodily never to be resurrected, an autopsy upon its brains, so to speak, would seem desirable, for the light it might throw upon one of the strangest paradoxes in the Russo-Jewish crucible.

The paradox consists briefly in this: The Yevsekzia was created ostensibly as an instrument for the communization of the Jewish masses in Russia, and as such its greatest endeavor should have been in the direction of helping the declassed Jew to find his way into the new economy of the land—on the farm and in the factory. But for a reason we shall here try to account for, the Yevsekzia from the very beginning of its career acted as though afflicted with a mania for heresy hunting, until, from an organization which was supposed to represent the dire needs of an economically uprooted Jewry, it soon degenerated into something like a "Watch and Ward" society, spying upon observant Jews, persecuting the synagogue, rabbis, Zionism, and Hebrew, with a severity surpassing that of the "Ogpu" (Secret Political Police) itself.

It is in its latter capacity that the Yevsekzia recalled to the world most vividly the truth of the adage: "Deliver me from my friends, and I shall take care of my enemies myself."

# The "Yevsekzia" Paradox

A psycho-analysis of the late Jewish Section of the Communist Party, U. S. S. R.

By DAVID GOLDBERG

In itself the need for a special Jewish section of the Communist Party sprang from an anomaly, from the fact that to the very outbreak of the Revolution Russian Jewry was looked upon generally as a separate nationality within the Empire; it possessed all the *de facto* attributes of a political nationality, within the European meaning of that term. It had a separate territory—the "Pale"; a separate tongue—Yiddish; and a distinct community of interests—that of the petty bourgeois. To be sure, there were some whose right to domicile and occupation was not restricted, and who spoke Russian, instead of Yiddish. But they constituted a very small minority, powerless to affect the status of the millions of their brethren who were not permitted to circulate and naturalize within the broad life of Great Russia. Judged externally, by sheer political criteria, they were, therefore, regarded as a separate nationality.

It thus came about that when the Revolution let loose upon the world the motto of the inherent right of all nationalities to self-determination, Russian Jewry, too, as a matter of course, was included among the beneficiaries. Unfortunately, there was a "joker" hidden in this motto for the Jew, and ultimately what he received of it was only a travesty upon benefit—the Yevsekzia.

For if the political formula of nationhood is analyzed with respect to the Russian Jew it is found to be a mere fiction. The Pale, theoretically the territorial element in his nationhood, was in reality no more than the prison camp from which all his life he yearned to escape, and now that the Revolution had abolished the Pale it was a foregone conclusion that he would commence deserting it by the tens of thousands. That is exactly what happened. Again, the so-called community of interests of the Jew, small trading, was abolished with one stroke by the communist political economy, and with that another theoretical element of Russian-Jewish nationhood was gone. Only Yiddish was left him for the time being, the Jew's separate tongue, and that merely because, in the nature of things, a language can neither be forgotten nor acquired on short executive notice.

But though lacking in two essential attributes called for by the European formula for nationhood—separate territory and community of interests—Russian Jewry had to be dealt with by the Central Soviet as a separate nationality, for the time being at least, on the strength of Yiddish alone, as a practical necessity. Yiddish was the mother tongue of some 3,000,000 people, their only medium of articulation. What could be done with that hard fact?

It will be remembered that the Soviet declared itself for the integrity of all cultural groups within the Empire and that it could not, in the light of that declaration, force upon the Jews, or upon any other minority, the old Czaristic policy of russification by coercion. Again: on principle, the Soviet was not interested in the russification of the masses at all, but only in their communization. It designated itself deliberately "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics," leaving out the Russian appellation from the formula, to emphasize that it is the "Socialist Soviet" and not the Russian formula which counted in the Union.

There was but one logical course to take in the case of the Jewish masses, and that was to proceed to communize them through the medium of their own tongue and with the help of a special section of their own. Hence the Yevsekzia.

## II.

YIDDISH, then, it was which gave Yevsekzia its lease on life, and to that fact the strange psychosis of its leaders is traceable. It soon developed that alongside the official aim and purpose of the Yevsekzia—that of imbuing the Jewish masses with the communist ideology and ultimately fitting them into the new economic structure of the land—there grew up an unofficial purpose as well, not contemplated by Moscow at all, namely, to raise the prestige of Yiddish to the level, one is tempted to say, of a "holy" tongue, something which had never been attempted before in all Jewish history, and in that way perpetuate Yevsekzia's own claim to existence and power. That much the leaders could see clearly, that with Yiddish they would stand or fall as a power. For what would keep Yiddish alive,



with the "Pale" abolished and all restriction of contact with the vastness of Russian life removed?

There would be nothing to prevent the adoption by the Jews of the Russian vernacular, as they have adopted English in England and in America, as they have adopted German in Germany, as they have, generally speaking, adopted the vernacular of the land where they have not experienced restriction upon domicile and occupation. For its own existence, therefore, the Yevsekzia had to subimate Yiddish into something to which Jews might be asked to cling as a national duty. In other words, Yiddish had to be sublimated into some such position as Hebrew has been occupying in the minds of Jews these thousands of years. Except, of course, that it were the height of incongruity to refer to Yiddish as a "holy tongue," so that the sublimation of a necessity would have to be done on the strength of concepts and appellations of a purely proletarian-revolutionary flavor.

And here things at once began to take on a pathetic turn: A vocabulary of the kind which is required for the sublimation of so non-material a thing as is a language cannot be easily culled from the speech of a revolutionary proletarian. If you taboo such words as "holy" and "sacred," if you vow disregard for hoary age and tradition and you taunt religion and spirituality indiscriminately as an opiate of the people," you have no word left at your disposal wherewith to sublimiate anything. One can only repeat with zeal and flame, until his throat is rendered hoarse: "National, national, cultural, cultural!" but there the effect will end, and there will be no sense of sublimation as the human motion is trained to experience it. On the other hand, *there is that ancient tongue, Hebrew, upon which the Jewish mentality was fed for thousands of years, keeping alive the very ideas tabooed by the Revolution concepts.* Is it not clear, then, that Hebrew is the deadly foe of Yiddish, and hence of the Yevsekzia?

Yiddish, as is known, is a sort of polyglot tongue containing about 70% Middle High German, 20% Hebrew, and about 10% Slavic and miscellaneous colloquialisms. Yet, though it is only 20% of the entire vocabulary, the Yevsekzia feared Hebrew more than it feared the 70% German in it, because it was aware that the Hebrew in the Yiddish could not be regarded on a plane with barbarism, but rather as something which the Jew had taken out of the depth of his nativity, of his

very soul, in order to flavor a language which he was compelled to adopt *en route*, as it were, and with which he has had nothing to do for the major part of his history—Yiddish. The fact remains, the entire vocabulary of Yiddish is a borrowed vocabulary, while the 20% Hebrew in it is the Jew's very own. *If Yiddish should ever dissolve into its component parts, as it were, 70% of it will go back to the Germans, and 10% to the Slavs. But the 20% Hebrew will remain at its source—with the Jews.*

Therefore in Hebrew Yevsekzia recognized a most implacable enemy, and accordingly began to persecute it. It so happens that, by implication, Hebrew lends itself in Soviet Russia conveniently to indictment on several purely technical grounds. It is, to begin with, the language of the Bible and of prayer, and hence of religion. Next, it is the tongue nationalistically acclaimed by the Zionists, and the latter, as a class, are *personae non-gratae* in the eyes of the Revolution, by reason of their alliance with Great Britain and the League of Capitalist Nations. Finally, Hebrew is still "the holy tongue of the sentimental Jewish intelligentsia," and there is enough opprobrium in this one phrase to stir up hostility in the breasts of the most simon-pure communists.

### III.

AS time went on the Yevsekzia grew more and more exasperated by this phantom enemy which so palpably threatened its existence, yet could nowhere be cornered so as to be slain with one mighty stroke. Now, the secret of the strength of Hebrew lies exactly in that it is not simply a nationalistic tongue, but rather a tongue in which a people has enshrined its whole historical past, its culture. *As such it is bound in an unfathomable way to color the mentality and idiom of the Jew no matter where and when he lives, and what his vernacular.*

For example: A German-speaking Jew calls the seventh day of the week *Samstag* when in conversation with a German Christian. But *Samstag* is a woefully inadequate name for that day as between the Jew and himself. *Shabbus* is the word for him, because it is meaningful, because back of it there is that peculiar Jewish Sabbath-concept which, in a way that can only be felt but not explained, is not the same as the Christian Sabbath-concept. It is the same with thousands of other Hebrew words which found their way into his acquired vernaculars. *Indeed, they were carried there unconsciously*

*as a native relish, to make the strange vernacular more palatable.* One might say with truth that this 20% Hebrew which crept into the Yiddish is not at all random, *but rather choice historical concepts for which the Germanic and Slavic tongues of his adoption had no adequate terms for the Jew.*

It seems that in Moscow they appreciated the error of viewing such a phenomenon as Hebrew through the political lenses of the Revolution exclusively. Therefore the Commissar for Education, Lunacharski, was heard to speak approvingly of the value of Hebrew culture, while it is known beyond question that the Hebrew branch of the Moscow Art Theater, the *Habimah*, was actually subsidized from the Soviet treasury.

Unfortunately, the Central Soviet had graver problems to cope with than to mix into what it regarded as but a family quarrel between Hebrew and Yiddish. This attitude of aloofness on the part of the Central government left the Yevsekzia free to adroitly exploit for its own ends the connection between Hebrew and Zionism and Religion, keeping away from the main purpose for which it was created, but instead prying, inquisition-like, into the Jewish soul, as though the misfortune of the Jew lay in his Hebrew and in his religion, and not in the fact that the single economic position for which Russian history itself had trained him had now been taken away from under his feet, without affording him another position to stand upon.

### IV.

BUT the leaders of the Yevsekzia soon realized that with all the trump-cards of Religion and Zionism and Great Britain in their hands, they could not succeed in their crusade against Hebrew so long as 20% of it would be left to flavor Yiddish. For among these leaders there were Hebraists of no mean calibre, and the chief crusader, M. Litvakov, erstwhile editor of the Moscow *Emes* has had even a record of a Zionist propagandist behind him. He certainly could see, from his own flesh, as it were, that what gives Yiddish the flavor of a national tongue is exactly the 20% Hebrew therein, and not the 70% Middle High German or the 10% Slavic.

So Hebrew could neither be killed nor allowed to live. It stood there as a bone in the throat of the Yevsekzia, neither to be swallowed nor to be coughed up. As a separate tongue Hebrew could be proscribed easily enough, as we have seen, on the strength of its association with religion



and with Zionism. But what could one do about the Hebraism of Yiddish itself? That was a snake in Yevsekzia's own bosom.

A way at last seemed to have been found: The pernicious influence of the Hebrew upon the Yiddish, the Yevsekzia reasoned, is clearly due to the fact that the former is being studied as a separate tongue by the people who also speak Yiddish, and is then smuggled into the latter with all the weight of the Hebraic ideology back of it. But if the Hebrew were made to dry up at its source, that part of it which found its way into the Yiddish would likewise dry up, for lack of nourishment. Accordingly, it is necessary to strike at Hebrew with a two-edged sword. As such Hebrew must be banned unceremoniously, as a counter-revolutionary tongue. From within the Yiddish, however, *all the Hebrew which must be retained, for a reason we shall soon see*, should be so disfigured and mutilated by a newly devised orthography, as to make it impossible for a new generation to ever connect it with its mother-source. The device, in plain, called for the killing of the parent in order to facilitate the abduction of the child.

#### V.

IT is in connection with this new orthography that the troubled mind of the Yevsekzia is best revealed. It so happens that Yiddish, of which 80% has no philological connection of any sort with the Hebrew, is nevertheless written in Hebrew characters. The historico-psychological reason for that is illuminating:

Yiddish has come into the life of the Jew rather recently, measured by the length of his own history. It is a language which he adopted of hard necessity in the course of his sojourn in the German speaking countries, and not of choice. No matter how well this vernacular has eventually been made to serve as a vehicle for Jewish cultural expression, it was nothing but a strange language in the early stages of acquisition, and it is an axiom that what is strange one can never love as his very own.

By the same token that the Jew brought into his newly acquired vernacular a sufficient vocabulary of his native Hebrew, to give it relish, he likewise chose to write it in Hebrew characters in order to give it a kindred appearance. It is thus that the two most unlike languages as to origin, barring the residue of the Hebrew in the Yiddish, have been employing the same set of characters.

Now, apparently, here was a ready

opportunity to sever the troublesome residue of Hebrew from its baneful source, and it was necessary but to follow the example of the Soviet itself in its dealing with a similar problem. Thus, one of the motives for adopting the Gregorian calendar was to destroy the religious significance of the old Russian calendar, and one of the sub-motives for the new Russian orthography was to dissociate the Russian language from the Old Church-Slavonic. By the same token, the Yevsekzia might have ordered the adoption for the Yiddish of the German or Russian alphabets, in lieu of the Hebrew, and thus in the speediest possible way obliterate all vestige of intimacy with the Hebrew tongue. *Why was this simple expedient not resorted to?*

Because such procedure would have been apt to undermine the existence of Yiddish much quicker than the Hebrew. To write a language which is 70% German, let us say, in German characters is like returning it to its original source wherein it would be bound to disappear. We know of instances in history where dialects, employing the same set of letters, have in the course of time succeeded in emancipating themselves from their mother-tongues; *but only in the case of sovereign peoples within their national territories*, like the Dutch, the Flemms, and the Serbians. But there is no instance of a dialect gaining independence where that historic condition did not exist. On the other hand, we have evidence that even where a people was never dislodged from its territory, but only lost its sovereignty thereto, it could not maintain its linguistic independence against the dominant tongue of the land. We see, for instance, that Scotch and Irish are only English dialects in the final test, and under Britain's sovereignty will never be anything else.

And if Yiddish has survived so long without the Jew exercising territorial sovereignty in Russia, it was only because he was provided with an excellent, sociologically speaking, substitute for sovereignty. He was provided with the "Pale" which, though spelling for him a condition quite the opposite of independence, served, so far as his language is concerned, the same purpose. Now, with the "Pale" gone, Yiddish in Russia, if nature is left to take her course, must go the way it went in the rest of the world where Jews were not restricted to domicile and occupation. It must disappear, *unless kept up artificially*, on the strength of national sentiment. But

this artificial method certainly calls for the emphasizing of the distinctness of Yiddish, instead of obliterating it. In other words, *it clearly calls for the retention of the Hebrew alphabet, as the most distinctive feature about Yiddish.*

The Yevsekzia finally hit upon this stratagem. It happens to be the peculiar property of Hebrew that it can be written and read without employing the short vowels, and that the doubling of certain consonants is indicated merely by a dot in the center of the letter to be doubled. It follows that the word for Sabbath, for example, which phonetically should be spelled "Shab-bat," is actually spelled with only three characters: *Sh-b-t*.

Now, Yiddish writers have always spelled the Hebrew words properly and their origin was thus unmistakable. The Yevsekzia, however, bent on eradicating the identity of these words with their Hebrew origin, proceeded to disfigure them by the use of short vowels in spelling, and by employing the two silent letters in the Hebrew alphabet (א and ע) as though they were vowels, whereas they are semi-consonants and root characters, requiring vowelizing themselves! The grotesqueness of a Hebrew word spelled the Yevsekzia way can never be fully appreciated by the uninitiated; yet an idea may be had from this one example: The Hebrew word for comrade—the most used word in Russia today—is spelled, true to the Hebrew orthography, with only three letters: *ch-v-* (חבר). Now, the Yevsekzia way, is spelled with six letters (כחבר), of which only one, the "r", occurs in the Hebrew spelling of the same word.

#### VI.

THE Yevsekzia as an organization is no more, but it does not mean that the Yevseks as individuals have given up their ghosts. It is reasonable to hope, however, that such leaders as Merejhin, the happy exception to the general run of leaders in the Yevsekzia, will now have a much freer hand to carry on the constructive work in connection with the Crimean and Biro-Bidjan settlements, and with other projects aimed at the rehabilitation of the Russian Jew, than was possible heretofore. As for the historic role of the Yevsekzia, by its own doing it can be nothing more than an unpleasant recollection of a great revolutionary epoch. It was born of an anomaly and was doomed at the outset to dissolve in the face of Russo-Jewish realities.



# The New Humanism: Is It Compatible With Judaism?

By LEWIS I. NEWMAN



BELIEVE in Spinoza's God who reveals Himself in the orderly harmony of what exists, in a God who concerns Himself with the fates and actions of human beings." Thus Albert Einstein, the illustrious physicist, replied to an inquiry addressed to him by an orthodox American rabbi after a Catholic prelate had accused him of atheism. On closer examination of Spinoza's interpretation of God, we learn that the great Amsterdam philosopher did not

Louis I. Newman

regard Him as a "Person" in any human sense of the word. "God—the universal process and eternal reality behind the flux of things—may be said to have both a mind and a body. Neither mind nor matter is God; but the mental processes and the molecular processes which constitute the double history of the world—these and their causes and their laws—are God."

With the recent celebration of the 50th anniversary of Spinoza's death the question was again raised whether Spinozism is compatible with Judaism. No one for a moment will doubt the allegiance of Professor Einstein to the ideals and corporate life of his people; Spinoza remained a loyal Jew till his death, though the Amsterdam Jewish community, for a number of reasons, prompted by expediency, expelled him from their midst. Judaism has always permitted wide latitude of theological belief by the individual. Particularly in modern times, with the rise of Zionism, Jews of world-wide prominence have co-operated in the collective philanthropic, cultural, and racial causes of Israel without necessarily subscribing to the doctrines of the synagogue. But in the last two years a movement has arisen to bring into the very confines of the synagogue itself under the name of "religious Judaism" a set of principles

perilously close to the philosophic ideas of Spinoza and the metaphysical concepts of Einstein.

This phenomenon is the result of the influence exerted upon contemporary Judaism by the so-called New Humanism. This movement, not to be confused with the "Humanism" of the Renaissance, or even the literary Humanism of an ever-expanding group of men of letters today—though the latter in its quest for "discipline" is akin to the "religious" tendency—is an offshoot of Unitarianism. In Christian circles the leaders of Humanism include the late Dr. Frank Doan; Rev. Dr. A. Wakefield Slaten, formerly pastor of the West Side Unitarian Church, New York City; Dr. Curtis Reese; Dr. John Dietrich; and Rev. Mr. Charles Francis Potter who recently inaugurated in New York the "First Humanist Society" of the United States. In Jewish circles, Humanist influence is clearly discernible in the writings and preaching of numerous Rabbis in the Reform and Conservative pulpit, not only in the East, but the Middle West and South as well. The one specific effort, however, to redefine Judaism in Humanist terms has occurred in Los Angeles, where Rabbi Herman Lissauer, formerly associated with Congregation Beth Israel of San Francisco, and Temple Emanu-El of Los Angeles, has founded the so-called Jewish Institute of Los Angeles. He has announced its purposes as four-fold:

1. To interpret Judaism, to embody in it all truth, and to maintain it as a living culture, capable of keeping pace with the world's progress; and for these purposes to conduct schools for children and adolescents; classes, lectures and meetings for adults.

2. To emancipate religion from supernaturalism and superstition, to interpret religion as man's search for those ethical values which originate in human life and function in human relationship; and with this in view to conduct religious services.

3. To assist in the establishment of Palestine as the spiritual and cultural center of Jewish life; and for this purpose to link our efforts with the agencies working toward that end.

4. To perpetuate Judaism in America by helping to develop in Los Angeles a Jewish communal life and organization, based upon the recognition of the Jews as a cultural minority group in America.

This program indicates that Rabbi Lissauer is attempting an interesting blend of the new Humanism with Zionism, particularly the teachings of Ahad Ha-Am; with Kaplanism, or the views of Rabbi Mordecai M. Kaplan of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, as they have appeared in the *Menorah Journal* and the *Society for the Advancement of Judaism Review*; and with the viewpoint of the Ethical Culture Society of Felix Adler, expounded on a Jewish group basis in terms of "Jewish civilization." Rabbi Lissauer protests against the rulership of the "machine" in contemporary America and says: "To redeem human life from the tyranny of power, from the overlordship of energy, from the hardening influence of the mechanistic outlook, there is needed the spiritual insight of the Hebrew people, who have ever made it their profession to search for human ideals and values and to enhance the dignity of human life."

No fault can be found with this ideological approach. Doubtless many "intellectuals" today are searching for a credo whereby they can express themselves spiritually without attachment to old fashioned conventional religion, either liberal, conservative or orthodox in its emphasis. But Rabbi Lissauer, echoing the views of the Christian Humanists, undertakes a "rejection of the entire supernaturalistic view of God and Religion." "Indeed," he says, "I am not sure whether we may properly use the term God since our meaning of the term is so different from our fathers'. We do not hold any belief in God as an 'externalized, individualized, personal being.' When we speak the word God, it is purely in the poetical meaning, and as a symbol for the ideal. I have defined God as 'the advancing totality of our highest ideals.' We speak of religion as the search for life's meanings, 'the interpenetration of human life with idealism.' Our view of re-



ligion is solely humanistic, and in no way theistic. We deal with man and not with God. Our great difficulty is to find in Jewish life and literature any expression of this view, and we are compelled to interpret even the 'Sh'ma Yisrael' in order to enable us to voice the one expression which every Jew uses as a watchword."

The Christian Humanists, according to Mortimer Smith, writing in the *American Mercury* (October, 1929), refuse to think of "the starry universe" in any association whatsoever with a Supreme Being or Ruler. "They declare that we cannot be sure about the existence of deity (the bolder ones declare we can; there is none) and that it does not matter anyway. Man is the only real and actual thing and religion must concern itself with him and the problems arising from his relations with other men and not with speculations about worship, however intellectualized and sublimated, of some supposititious God. This new Humanism is really a revamping of the Religion of Humanity with this difference; most of the Humanists take a belligerent attitude towards God, and consider any mention of Him almost a personal affront." Dr. Slaten as head of the West Side Unitarian Church sought to substitute "words of aspiration" for prayers, these being, according to a critic, not petitions to God, "but admonitions to men in the form of platitudes about the Good Life." While the degree of non-Godliness varies with individual representatives of the new cult, the majority are united in seeking to meet the challenge of world-betterment. The cardinal concepts of religion—God, prayer, immortality, free will, the punishment of sin, and other doctrines—are inconsequential by the side of the humanitarian obligations of religionists. While they may not agree with H. L. Mencken who, in his "Treatise on the Gods," affirms that "civilized man has become his own god," they aim to discover the chief impulses of destiny and duty within mankind itself rather than in the dictates of the Supreme Personality in the Universe whom we have been accustomed to designate as God.

This "Godless religion" has proved a veritable "Godsend" to many persons who desire the protection of being called "religious" without believing in a Deity. But the whole argument between the Humanists and Liberal Religion hinges on the query: Can we moderns accept a Personal God, to whom we can offer prayer and with whom we

co-operate in the unfolding panorama of evolution? Jewish ideas concerning God vary widely today among the rabbis themselves. Thus Rabbi Solomon S. Goldman, writing in the *New Palestine* (June 7, 1929) on "The God of Modern Israel: Replacing Old Conceptions with Those of a New World," formulates ideas which, it is understood, aroused a veritable storm of protest among the traditionalist readers of the Zionist periodical. "It is difficult to maintain, as some would have it," he says, "that it is religion or the God-idea that holds Jewry together." "God is absorbed in the nationalism, or more correctly, in the nationality of Israel. He becomes the national 'ethos.' He serves as the symbol for Israel's noblest aspirations and loftiest ideals. He is the national God; He is the soul of the nation." We find other rabbis leaning towards a "God of Astrophysics," reminiscent of the Deity envisaged by Harry Elmer Barnes in his widely-discussed address at a meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Rabbi H. G. Enelow in the symposium "My Idea of God" compiled by Joseph Fort Newton, voices the classic Jewish conception of "God, the Eternal."

Whatever be the special emphasis adopted by individual rabbis, the Jewish conception of God, if it is to remain faithful to the main stream of Jewish tradition, must include the notion of His Personality. The Lord of Israel has not been conceived in anthropomorphic or human terms, though the adjectives applicable to Him can be derived only from the known sources of our language. Just as a formula or a creed is never able to embrace the totality of ideas within its compass, so the true nature of God is always vaster than any mortal expression of it. Jehudah Ha-Levi thinks of God as a Personal Being, acting with purpose and will, and standing in close personal relation to Israel and the Land of Palestine. The essence of the conflict between Liberal Jews and the Humanists lies in this very problem of Divine Personality. It is not sufficient, according to majority Jewish opinion, to think of God merely as a Law, a Force, a Vital Push, a Power "not ourselves making for righteousness." Though certain groups in modern psychology and philosophy are seeking to eliminate the idea of personality in man and by the same token of Personality in God, we continue to turn to God, not as a blind force, but as an Intelligent Being with whom we can commune

through prayer and service. We arrive at a belief in God's Personality through several channels. We can approach a knowledge of Him through our study of man's nature. When we stand in the presence of a great and illustrious human being, we detect a vibrancy, an electric quality, a psychic and intellectual energy whereby we catch glimpses of a power in the universe so vast we can scarcely comprehend it. If man at his best possesses conscious, directive, purposeful vitality, we become convinced that the universe itself cannot lack an entity which a mortal being possesses.

We are led to recognize the Creative Personality of God by observing the presence and evolution of the soul in a child from infancy through youth into maturity. We cannot regard a human person as the result of merely stimuli and reactions, of heredity, environment and education. Rather must we think of him as mirroring the Divine Personality in the Universe in Whose life he shares.

We are prompted to think of God in personal terms because we behold how man revolts against a belief that the world is a machine and himself a puppet without self-motivation or intelligent self-control. Behind every magical invention, beneath every soaring edifice of steel and stone within every chemical compound stands the creative intelligence of man, following an urgency mightier than itself, fulfilling a will of grandeur and holiness. Man resolves to think himself a free agent in the universe thereby symbolizing the Universal Free Being whom we call God.

God is Personal to us because we see how man fashions a poem, between whose lines a spirit courses; he builds a symphony, within whose black notes an eternal melodic voice sounds; he fabricates a painting amid whose colors a master-artist communicates with us; he carves brute stone into living substance wherefrom a Vital Being leaps. Within nature, ourselves and even through seemingly inanimate things, a Personality resides and functions, with whom man's personality feeble and inadequate though it be possesses the faculty of communication and fellow-labor. Man is irresistibly moved to justice, goodness, love and perfection. Man rebels against the thought that the Universe is harsh, dumb and silent. He peoples it with a Personality Who is Friend and Companion, to Whom he sends forth poems, prayers, and hymns, the noblest utterances of his

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# Franz Rosenzweig

A Contemporary Jewish Philosopher, 1886-1929

By ISRAEL AUERBACH



THE world is longing for miracles, for evidence of a victory of the spiritual over the physical, for proof of the soul's faculty to produce, transform or preserve the body in opposition to all known laws of space and time, of reason and physiology. And such a miracle was the life of Franz Rosenzweig, who died on December 10, 1929: such a miracle at least were the last eight years of his life.

Motionless a man was lying on his back, limbs and tongue and eyelids paralyzed, suffering the long days and the dark nights through the weeks and through the months, through the seasons and through the years; fully conscious of the inevitable end awaiting him. Yet this man did not do what Prometheus and Job once did. No complaint, no wrath, neither despair nor doubt entered the soul embodied in this living corpse, not even sadness or affliction. He remained calm and strong, sure of himself and cheerful. His mind dreamed, thought, and worked—yes, and created, created thus after opus, was filled with beauty, strength, and truth, so broad in conception and so noble in aim, that there seemed to be no limit to his creative power.

And so it was that a strong and living soul carried a weak and almost dead body, and forced him to continue serving as the instrument that the soul required. That, belying every probability of physiology, every experience of science, was the miracle of Franz Rosenzweig.

None but two insignificant links connected this rich, poor man with the world outside and in but two ways could he communicate his ideas. One single joint of his little finger had retained mobility, enabling Rosenzweig to point out the letters on a cleverly constructed machine, forming the letters into syllables, words, sentences, and books. Then there were his eyes, talking a language all their own and understandable to just one person: his wife. Her name verily should be inscribed in the book of glory together with the name of Franz Rosenzweig, congenial collaborator of his creation that she was. Nobody could ever understand the secret of

telepathy employed by these two. Yet it existed and is evidenced by glorious proofs. Not only were books created by this means, but it made possible the intercourse between the paralyzed man and the outer world, his mother and child, his friends and pupils. O that miracle of discussion, spirited, elevating, fiery exchange of thoughts! Doctors had predicted the moment when the miracle would vanish. It had to be the very moment when the last joint would refuse service. When there would no longer be possibility for expression, for creation, then hope would disappear, then life would lose its sense. And that was the moment when the soul, too, surrendered. Then Franz Rosenzweig wanted to die, and die he did.

\* \* \*

FRANZ ROSENZWEIG'S beginning was as happy as his end was tragic. Born the scion of a prosperous and well established family in Kassel, he made people soon take notice of him on account of his looks, strength and intelligence. Indeed he could have made a great success and name for himself on the surface of life, had he not been a born philosopher gifted with the intuition for one great discovery: the discovery of Judaism.

He did not receive so much "Juedischkeit" at home or in school. Had it not been for a distant relative, Franz would have hardly remembered that he was a Jew at all. And he did not find Judaism by living with Jewish people, not by fighting for Jewish problems or by suffering the Jewish fate of persecution. He fell in love with Judaism after he realized the beauty that is ours. Knowing Jewish history, appreciating Jewish literature, made him understand the nature of our people, their aims and their mission. And so it was that the student turned teacher and the guided one became a guide. Whatever happiness he derived for himself out of his studies, he passed on to his brothers of his newly discovered people. In 1918, while a teacher of Talmud in Frankfurt, he said this: "During the forenoon I learn from the East, during the afternoon I teach to the West." To learn and to teach was his maxim all through life.



Franz Rosenzweig

In the midst of the turmoil of war, in 1917, he dedicated a pamphlet to Hermann Cohen: "Zeit ist's" ('Tis time). He advocated the study of Jewish science as a means to give to all the people what he himself enjoyed in so large a measure: Jewish spirituality and Jewish rejuvenation. And directly traceable to the influence of this pamphlet is the foundation of the Academy for the Science of Judaism in Berlin and the Liberal Jewish Academy in Frankfurt.

B'nai B'rith at Frankfort-am-Main named one of its lodges for Hermann Cohen and Franz Rosenzweig early affiliated with it.

\* \* \*

IN HIS very form of life, in all his teachings and beliefs, Franz Rosenzweig exemplified what he termed "synthetic Judaism." Any one of the numerous "part-Judaisms" appeared to him as insufficient, as almost un-Jewish. He repudiated a solution offered by any "Patent-Judaism." Orthodoxy to him was too narrow a concentration on religious duty; Zionism too limited a conception of national boundaries; liberalism too vague a canon of ideas. His Judaism was rather a trinity of race, idea and the law. Without national undercurrent, idea and law became vague to him; lacking the Jewish idea Jewish nationalism would be imitation and assimilation; without the backbone of the Law the idea would not last. And so it was that Franz



Rosenzweig did not belong to any one Jewish faction and yet to all of them. And to the development of all of them he contributed.

Though he was all comprising in respect to his Jewishness, he still kept a niche open in his heart for the beauties of the German language. His translations of the Diwan of Jehuda Halevi and of parts of the Bible, both undertaken in collaboration with Martin Buber, are to be counted among the gems of German-Jewish and Jewish-German symphony. This friendship between Buber and Rosenzweig will be viewed as a beautiful legend in time to come. From it emanated not only the Bible translation but also a golden string of discussions and letters which, it is to be hoped, will be preserved for coming generations. In these discussions it appears as if only the one participant talked whereas the other remained silent and motionless, answering only with eyes and finger. Yet it was he, Franz Rosenzweig, who urged his friend on and on to greater achievements. What courage, what confidence it took to dare undertake a translation of the Bible under these conditions. And yet, there has not been made since Luther a translation of the Book of Books more beautiful, more inspired, more truthful. And never was there before or after a more scientifically correct or a more innately Jewish Bible translation.

With Isaiah, Rosenzweig had discovered his Jewishness; with the translation of Isaiah completed, he died. What a tragic, what a mystic circle.

As a philosopher Franz Rosenzweig went in exactly the opposite direction from Martin Buber. Buber had started out from chassidism and mysticism to approach rationalism; Rosenzweig had left the rationalism of Hegel and Cohen and found his way to a poetical and almost mystical conception. In his "Star of Delivery" (Stern der Erloesung) he has given to posterity the most complete philosophical system of Jewish content in existence.

The works of Franz Rosenzweig were published shortly before he was attacked by an insidious nervous disease the nature of which no doctor was able to explain, though malaria during the war is supposed to have caused it. In 1922 this wonderful man collapsed, never to recuperate again. But is not his very martyrdom the greatest exemplification of his Jewishness, more so than his ideas and ideals? Therein he is like his people who, paralyzed and persecuted for

thousands of years, by the strength of their soul alone, survive. The only difference is in the end: The son of his people passes away but the people as a whole continue and go on forever.

\* \* \*

## THE NEW HUMANISM

(Continued from Page 310)

surcharged heart. Let the calculating, methodical, logical men argue; the poets, musicians and mystics know. To them God is not a Thing, a Machine, but a Being, a Friend, a Person Universal.

\* \* \*

THE Jewish Prayer Book, whether Orthodox, Conservative or Reform, contains within its every line, implicit and explicit, the concept of God, the Supreme, Creative and Co-operating Intelligence. It may well be that the Jewish leaders, flirting with Humanism, are fulfilling a Jewish injunction in laying stress upon the "this-worldliness" rather than the "other-worldliness" of Judaism. It may be that modern agnosticism which

preaches an Unknown and Unknowable God has proved its case with numerous spiritually-minded persons. It may be that Jewish Humanism is "putting into words, thoughts which had been gathering in the minds of those who are eager to be numbered among the 'religionists' without being questioned too closely concerning their theology. But it is certain that if these Jewish Humanists are to authenticate their arguments through citations from the Scriptures of Israel, they must scan our literature with unyielding care and precision. We have included within our company men of vastly divergent views; the unnamed authors of Job who maintained a Promethean controversy with God; the Gentle Preacher of Ecclesiastes who preached the gospel of 'vanity of vanities' inquiring: 'Who knoweth the spirit of man whether it goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast whether it goeth downward to the earth?' and the pious fatalists who remarked: 'I have been young and now I am old, yet never have I seen the righteous forsaken or the upright begging his bread.' We should conserve in modern Judaism the same latitudinarianism we have exhibited in the past; we should welcome 'all truth, whether shining from the annals of ancient revelations or reaching us through the seers of our own time.' In the same breath, however, we affirm concerning God: 'For Thou hidest not Thy light from any generation of Thy children that feel after Thee and seek Thy guidance.'

Perhaps out of the new tendencies in Judaism a new liturgy, a new ritual and a new Prayer Book will emerge. We must be open-minded towards the individual innovator because he may have a worthwhile contribution to make towards the enrichment of Jewish values. In the meantime, however, we must not succumb to the secularist, mechanistic viewpoint of our age. Merely because it is difficult to reconcile the concepts of God's immutable laws with His receptiveness towards prayer; the evil and cruelty of the Universe with our faith in His goodness and beneficence; man's submissiveness to destiny with his determination to surmount it in God's name, we must not surrender the intrinsic merit of our legacy. The God of Israel has engaged, as Micah indicates, in many a controversy with His people, but in the end Israel, though it has testified against God, has accepted Him as the Lord of goodness, justice, mercy, and friendship.



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# From Morn to Night in Palestine

By E. DAVID GOITEIN

I

## EARLY MORNING

THE way some people write, you would think that we in Palestine (yes, I am on the road to becoming a Palestinian) are either killing one another in riots most of the time or are living a strenuous life, fighting nature on the land. That, let me hasten to add, is a caricature of the truth. We live—tens of thousands of us—quite normal lives. But do not run away with the idea that I mean “ordinary” lives. No. Some of us lead surprising lives. Yet this one thing is clear, that the background of our life is laughter and not tears. I have never heard so much laughter in a year elsewhere as I have heard in one month in Jerusalem. We laugh when we eat, we laugh when we play. It therefore seems to me good that I should deal in this article not with questions of high policy, not with serious discussions of economic problems nor with the thorny problem of Arab-Jewish relations. No. I am going to deal with “the ordinary day of the ordinary man.” I will not be surprised if before the article is finished you will have come to the conclusion that I have been describing an extraordinary day of an extraordinary . . . at modesty forbids.

One more preparatory word. When I say “I,” I do not mean me. Like the Psalmist, I speak for the whole of Jerusalem.

\* \* \*

IT IS at five or six in the morning that I am awakened. A dismal cry reaches my ear:

aboooo! Maboooo!

aboooo! Oooba!

aboo—a

It is an Arab selling vegetables who passes under my window and hails at the top of his voice. His donkey, who pulls his cart, makes an even more evilish noise, like the sound of an ill-oiled machine. *Mabooa!* My servant brings in my hot water (I am in a pension, run by an American lady who came to Jerusalem as a Hadassah nurse) in a



The famous Jaffa gate

tea pot! He starts a conversation by asking me whether I slept well, whether I feel well, whether there is anything I want (he would be nearly an hour getting it if there were) and whether I do not think that the Palestine Administration is anti-Semitic and should not Mr. Luke be dismissed. He says all this in Hebrew, and because he realizes I am half asleep and have understood too little of what he has said, he tries it all over again in very, very broken English. But he has an ad-

vantage over me. He has already seen the *Doar Hayom* and knows what the editorial says about the dismissal of Mr. Luke. With my own eyes I have seen Yehuda polish shoes and read the leading article in the *Doar Hayom*. . . . If I ask him for a little more cold water, he says “Zet yas-pik”—You have enough—and can I start an argument in my poor Hebrew? He is bound to get the better of me.

Yehuda goes out and I get up; I look out of my window and I see the new King David Hotel in splints. It will be ready in another year. The finest hotel in the middle East, they say. . . . Behind are the Hills of Judah—fit background to the Puritanism of Israel. They are so gaunt, so severe. No frills and furbelows. Terrible, wonderful.

I wash with a piece of Palestinian soap—tozeret ha-aretz—and I realize that patriotism is a virtue . . . but the soap, in spite of its color, is good.

I will not worry you with details. I will ask you to come down with me to breakfast—at 7 a. m. There is no breakfast like a Jerusalem breakfast. Everyone must read at least two newspapers. Because if something appears in the *Doar Hayom*, it is bound to appear apparently in the *Haaretz*. And if Mr. Ben Yareach has a *Doar Hayom* and Miss Shemesh has a *Davar*, there will be a heated discussion as to which paper is telling the truth.

And now that I may tell you what “I” have to eat, I must ask you to leave the American pension and come

with me to my friend, Yakob Meir Hariri.

We begin by eating a small greased cake with nuts inside. This is followed by a plate of sour milk—or rather, sour cheese. And the sour cheese is followed by an argument as to why the Mufti has not been arrested. Follow eggs roasted in such a curious way as to taste like roast beef . . . At any rate, not like egg. There is a brown or black bread. White bread is not popular.



A typical Jerusalem street scene



Now I go to the office along the Jaffa Road. What a road! There are so many strange people from so many strange lands that before I have covered 100 yards I have seen Jews from Georgia, Black Christians from Abyssinia, a Mohammedan policeman from the Soudan, a tall Bedouin woman with a baby on her back and six kerosene tins on her head. She walks like a queen, tall as a poplar, upright as a cedar. Her chin is tattooed with a blue coloration. And there, sitting on the curb, are the ever to be wondered at Jews from Kurdistan. I tell you the Jaffa Road is a perpetual miracle. If I live in Jerusalem another 75 years—without the Evil Eye I say it—I shall not tire of the marvelous richness of human types which pass me as I go to my office. On the left hand side of the road is a news vendor's shop. He pins up on the board outside the top half of the *Doar Hayom*, *Haaretz*, *Davar*, and underneath—because the Englishman can afford to buy a copy—the *Palestine Bulletin*. Here I see every day a little crowd craning and straining its neck to catch a glimpse of the news. There is a chassid with a coat down to his ankles, with a broad brimmed pancake hat, rubbing shoulders with an *epicoris* of a Communist, and next to them both is a beggar who lives on charity sent from Poland. When I first walked along this Jaffa Road that same beggar used to come up to me, begging. "God grant you a good Sabbath, my wife is ill. I have seven children. God grant you. . . ." In order that I should not soil my hands—no, in order that he should not soil his hands, he carries a small handkerchief, on which you place the mil you give him. But I have never given him anything, and I never will give him anything even though he have seven wives and seven times seven children. . . . But that unfortunate beggar has made me forget the chassid at the newspaper. When he has reached the bottom of the top part of the page he almost stands on his head to see what is underneath. He pulls a little, he pulls a little more, hoping that the pin which holds it to the board will come out. But the *epicoris* of a Communist will not let him do so . . .

If you dare to stop in the Jaffa Road for more than one minute, a little ruffian will come up to you with a wooden box in one hand and a threatening brush in the other and will say, "Shine sir, shine! Fine shoe shine. Big shine, thank you, sir," and

then he will bang his brush upon his box to show you that he means business. You think I am pulling your leg? Not a bit of it. Shoe shining is one of the most flourishing industries in Palestine.

I have no right to tell you about the man who sold me an armchair. But I pass his shop every morning. And he is so typically Jerusalem. An American friend of mine told me he is just a bluffer. I say he is just Jerusalem. Well, I bought an armchair from him. I paid too much money for it—but it was made in Tel-Aviv, and what will not a fool do to back up the only 100% Jewish City in the world? After a week of reasonable use, the chair, like the one hoss shay, came all to pieces. I went and told Mr. Dunkelburg about his chair and he said he could not believe it. No, he could not believe it. I did not wish to leave him in such a state of incredulity, so I invited him to my office. When he saw the chair he said, "I can't believe it." It is difficult to persuade a man who cannot believe his own eyes. Well, he got one of my Jewish workers of Kurdistan, a man with a long grey beard, a bright red face, and smiling eyes to carry my chair back to his shop. He promised it within a week. That was five weeks ago. Every day I say to him "When is my chair coming back?" He says: "Hasn't the man brought it back?" "No," say I. He says, "I can't believe it."

Jaffa Road, I ought to have mentioned earlier, is the main street of Jerusalem. You cannot help meeting your friends there. I know of no morning when I have failed to meet someone. Be sure that that someone will want to talk. This morning for instance . . . but, again, I am forgetting an essential point. There are three official languages in Palestine, even four, and the man who speaks them all is certain to be detained longer on the road than one who, like myself, speaks only two. I do not speak Arabic—at least, not with ease. I do not speak Yiddish, at least, not so that any one could understand me. To return. This morning I met a lawyer who was going to defend a Jew who had been given four years imprisonment for attempted murder of an Arab during the riots. The Jew, it need hardly be said, had fired the shots in self-defense. But in Palestine we don't take that into account . . . My friend was on his way to the Court of Appeals. We discussed the right of a man to defend himself. We talked about the evidence

that had been given; the perjured witnesses, the judge who had forgotten his law . . . . A minute or two after I had left him, along comes Miss Spiegelman who works in the Hadasah . . . I talk with her . . . I try and go on my way, but I am hailed in Hebrew by my good friend Shalom Meiri, who wants my views on the rift between the Mufti and the Christian Arabs . . . I tell you, it is difficult to make much headway along the Jaffa Road . . . If you are an Arab, you do not need to make headway. You can sit all day in that cafe on t'other side the road and smoke your narghileh . . . But I must get to my office—so "Good-bye" here and "I must go" there and to the third "I will see you this evening."

Before turning the corner, I catch sight of . . . I really do not know his name . . . I know him as White Beard on a horse . . . I met him on the Day of Atonement in a Sephardic Synagogue in Rehavia. Everyone there was chocolate-colored, oriental looking. This man had a rosy complexion, a long white beard—looked noble. He saw that my *Machsor* had an English translation. He showed me that his also had an English translation. And here—above all places—I heard the English language spoken in the most cultural accents. He had been a sheriff—I think he said in St. Louis—and after his wife had died he had "come home." He was 85 and had been born in America. He had a wild scheme which he propounded to me by which there should be no more beggars in Palestine. "We are not beggars. We are princes" . . . He is 85 and you can see him every morning on his horse, trotting down Jaffa Road.

I turn the corner (notice the marvelously restful features of the blind man, who sits on the ground with a brass cup in his hand), and now I am within a stone's throw of my office. I am about to enter when I am stopped by loud shouts of "*Baroot*." An Arab waves his arms excitedly. Everyone runs away. "*Baroot*" shouts the Arab. "*Baroot*" and he pushes me back to the place I have come from. You must understand that Jerusalem soil is a flinty rock. When you want to build a house—and they are building opposite my office—you have to blast the rock with dynamite. Before the explosion takes place, the warning cry "*Baroot*" advises you to keep out of harm's way—and then a terrible, deafening noise, as splinters of rock are thrown 100 feet high into the air. Four deafening noises. Crash! All is over. I go into my office.





**A New Playwright and a Fine Play.**  
THE sensation of the season on Broadway is a play written by a young Jewish boy, scarcely more than two or three years out of his teens. Not since *What Price Glory?* has a play provoked such spontaneous and sincere cheers on the opening night as *The Last Mile*.

*The Last Mile* cannot be considered a great play by any means. It is relentless realism, but it hasn't the saving grace of a co-ordinating idea which uplifts and exalts. It is out-and-out theater, and nothing more. But as theater, it is the most effective piece of stagecraft we have witnessed in any number of years of playgoing.

*The Last Mile* takes place in the death-house of a prison. The first act relates the last minutes of a condemned man before going to the electric chair. The other two acts depict a prison riot. It is the first act that one will forever remember. The last two acts are more obviously melodramatic. The author telegraphs his blows. One can see him operating his machinery of thrills. But the first act! Hard-boiled as we are as a theatergoer, it left us limp and breathless, our program twisted to bits by our nervous fingers.

It is not so long since John Wexley—then known as Jacob Wexler—was a student at the New Utrecht High School, where he used to announce to anyone who cared to listen that he was a great actor—a point he invariably proceeded to prove by reciting in full the prologue of Andreyev's *Anathema*. His scholastic training was interrupted periodically by his desires to see the world. He has bummed his way around a considerable portion of the world at large and this country in particular, discovering for himself how the inside of various jails looked—it being more to his advantage to spend his nights at the expense of the government than to plunk out his own dollar for a night's lodging.

Then, changing his name to John Wexley, he got a job with the old Neighborhood Players, who immediately after became defunct. Nothing daunted; Wexley played various roles

with the Civic Repertory Theater. This season he appeared with the Yiddish Art Theater of Maurice Schwartz, who happens to be his uncle. He played the role of the surly Andrey in Leo Bulgakov's production of Gorki's *At the Bottom*, relinquishing his part only when the success of *The Last Mile* made it evident that, for the time being at least, the wolf had no chance of getting near his door. Now, in the desk of his attorney, there repose a number of contracts calling for him to devote his time to Hollywood. But first Wexley is going on a lengthy vacation to Europe to gather background for his next play which, he confesses, is to have its locale in seven different cities.

## 2: Two Older Playwrights.

THERE was definite promise in Sam Behrman's comedy, *The Second Man*, when it was produced by the Theater Guild several years ago. Not the vague promise of a play which, having faults, still gave indication of better things to come from the pen of the playwright, but the concrete example of a fine first play. I doubt whether any man has even written a better first play than *The Second Man*.

This year Behrman was represented on Broadway by a new play which, although not as perfectly written as *The Second Man* and *Serena Blandish*, marks a step forward for him as a dramatist. *Meteor*, which was presented by the Theater Guild under Philip Moeller's regime, does not hit the mark as unerringly as Behrman's other two plays, but then he has aimed at a more difficult target.

Behrman attempted, in *Meteor*, the character analysis of an egocentric, a man supremely confident in himself and with the power to make others believe in him—in short, a man who approximates genius. A difficult task, doubtless, and in Behrman's hands it is often very muddled. But there are still moments when one believes in Behrman's Raphael Lord, there are moments when one is carried along in a great torrent of sympathy, there are moments when one is exalted by the

sweep and power of penetration of Behrman's superb dialogue.

Another play that depended mainly upon its dialogue was Edwin Justus Mayer's *Children of Darkness*. This is the play which, under the title of *The Goaler's Wench* and *The Lady from Newgate*, Jed Harris tried out several years ago with Ina Claire in the leading role, and which got as close to Broadway as Broad Street, Newark. Mary Ellis and Basil Sydney were the leading lights of the present production.

*Children of Darkness* is the same sort of gobbled history as Eddie Mayer's earlier play, *The Firebrand*, which gave Joseph Schildkraut an opportunity to show that he knew his cantharides, and like the earlier play is noteworthy for its delicious dialogue. Mayer is never afraid of making two words bloom where only one grew before. He has a skillful pen and he uses it. His phrases roll beautifully off the tongues of the actors and pleasantly into the ears of the audience. The play is a sprig of mignonette growing on a tenement window sill in the slums that is Broadway.

## 3: Shorter Notice.

DAVID FREEDMAN'S *Mendel, Inc.*, fashioned from his novel, *Mendel Marantz*, is doing very nicely at the Ritz Theater, and has recently been sold for production in Soviet Russia. As a play it is completely unimportant, but it is tremendously funny. Greater praise has no dramatic critic. Besides being Jewish in subject matter, the play is almost entirely Jewish in personnel. Lew Cantor is the producer, and the featured players are Alexander Carr, Lisa Silbert, Joe Smith and Charles Dale, the latter two being the erstwhile better half of the Avon Comedy Four of vaudeville memory. . . .

The two smash hits of the musical season are *Simple Simon* and *Strike Up the Band*. *Simple Simon*, a Ziegfeld production, is breaking all records at the Ziegfeld Theater, and without question owes its success to the wagishness of that genius of buffoons, Ed Wynn. Ed Wynn has created a



universal comic character, composed, as universal comic characters should be, of whimsy, pathos, and an elevated humor. He is as outstanding a comedian in his field as Charlie Chaplin is in his. *Simple Simon*, in addition, is enhanced by the songs of Lorenz Hart and Richard Rodgers.

*Strike Up the Band* is justifying the faith and the \$130,000 that Edgar Selwyn put into the production. With this show George Gershwin is recouping some of the prestige which he lost with his score for *Show Girl*. His brother, Ira, proves once more that he is one of the most intelligent of lyric writers. Morrie Ryskind's book, based upon a libretto by George S. Kaufman, is both funny and satirical. On the whole, an excellent show, deserving of its success. . . .

What was supposed to have been a great event in the American theater proved to be a dismal failure. I refer to Maurice Moscovitch's return to America in the Ashley Dukes dramatization of Feuchtwanger's novel, *Power*, called on the stage *Josef Suss*. To begin with, the play was as ponderous and trying as the novel was powerful and enthralling. Neither the English version nor the version done in Yiddish by the Yiddish Art Theater was able to maintain one's interest. And Moscovitch's "second American debut," as he called it, was a sad thing. He was completely miscast and had no opportunity to show the acting of which he is capable. . . .

In my last article in these pages on Broadway, I expressed the wish that the trio of Lorenz Hart, Richard Rodgers, and Herbert Fields, might combine again for the mutual benefit of themselves and musical comedy. The Warner Brothers came to the rescue immediately, the answer to a critic's prayer. Hart, Rodgers, and Fields have been signed to write two musical comedies a year for a period of three years to be made into photoplays by Warner Brothers. I trust their reunion will be permanent. . . .

#### 4: Here and There.

A NEW, young playwright will scintillate on Broadway next season. Moss Hart has sold two plays at once, one to Jed Harris, the other to Sam Harris. Hart appeared with Charles Gilpin in *The Emperor Jones* a few years ago, and since then has been the director of a little theater in Newark. The Sam Harris play, called *Once in a Lifetime*, will be directed by George S. Kaufman. In addition, Moss Hart is one of the authors of a new musical comedy called *Jonica* and produced by William Friedlander. . . .

Fannie Brice made a triumphant return to vaudeville recently at the Palace Theater, her appearance in the flesh eclipsing her new picture. . . . Helen Menken is back on Broadway in *The Infinite Shoeblack*, which gives her her first opportunity for real acting since *The Captive*. . . . Sylvia Sidney is also back, in Lew Cantor's production, *Many a Slip*. . . .

George Jessel took a flyer in acting and another in producing, neither with any sort of success. *Joseph*, the play in which Jessel appeared, disappeared very unobtrusively after only a couple of weeks, while his first effort in production, a play called *This Man's Town*, lasted no longer. Undaunted, he is preparing for his next production, a musical comedy in which he himself will appear. This will be his first appearance in a musical comedy in something like six years. . . . Benn Levy, the young Jewish playwright whose plays cut quite a swathe in London, is the adaptor of the Shubert play, *Topaze*, from the French of Marcel Pagnol. . . .

George Gershwin is variously reported as being at work on (1) a musical play with Sam Behrman, (2) a musical comedy with Arthur Richman, (3) a ditto with Eddie Cantor, (4) still another with Herb Fields, (5) a dramatic musical comedy for Libby Holman, (6) a serious opera based on *The Dybbuk*, (7) an original jazz opera for the moving pictures, and (8) a jazz symphony. . . .

Moving picture gossip: Benny Rubin, who played with Marion Davies in *Marianne*, is growing exceedingly popular in Hollywood. He is at present at work in a number of short features. . . . Lila Lee, who seems to be in almost every new picture, was born plain Augusta Appel. . . . While on the subject, it may be mentioned as a matter of record that Ricardo Cortez is a Coney Island boy whose name used to be Jake Krantz. . . . And Mary Doran is known to her family as Frieda Applebaum. . . . Georgie Stone is another Jewish boy who has made good in a big way in Hollywood with the coming of the talkies. . . . Edwin Justus Mayer is to be commended for the way he has adapted *Dulcy*, the Kauffman-Connolly play, to the screen. . . . So should John Howard Lawson for his dialogic efforts in *Dynamite*, a fine picture. . . . Incidentally, John is doing the dialogue for *Trader Horn*. . . . Sam Behrman is the latest Broadwayite to make the long trek out to the film capital. . . . Ben Lyon has finally completed work on the aerial picture which took three years to film. . . .

#### 5: Mainly Personal.

RICHARD RODGERS recently joined the ranks of the benedicts and is at present abroad on his honeymoon. . . . His side-kick, Larry Hart, is soon to start on a trip around the world, in emulation of Noel Coward. . . . Lew Brice, Fannie's brother, has followed her example and had his nose remodeled. . . . George Gershwin devotes what spare time he has to dabbling with paints and brushes, and nourishes the idea that he might have been an excellent painter. . . . Edgar Wynne uses over 180 props in *Simple Simon*. . . . Mary Ellis was a star at the Metropolitan Opera House before she was 19. . . . That Arnold Moss, a member of the Civic Repertory Theater, will be one of the greatest actors in the world in a few years is the prediction of Eva Le Gallienne. . . .

Howard Dietz, at present working on the second edition of *The Little Show*, is an expert at anagrams. And also a ping-pong enthusiast. . . . Sam Behrman wears octagonally-shaped glasses. . . . Elmer Rice was a disciple of Blackstone before trying his hand at authoring plays. . . . Oscar Strauss, composer of *The Chocolate Soldier*, who passed through New York recently on his way to Hollywood, smokes the largest cigars we have ever seen in anyone's mouth—almost a foot long. He does not like jazz but his son, at 19, is already composing much music—jazz music. . . . Victor Schertzinger, the moving picture director, is also a first class musician. He composed the music for *The Love Parade*. . . . Erno Rapee has gone to Hollywood for a yearly stipend which runs into six figures, not counting decimal points. . . .


The ambition of Samson Raphaelson, author of *The Jazz Singer*, is to own a yacht. . . . Jacob Ben Ami, already a fixture on the English-speaking stage, still deports himself like a Yiddish actor. . . . Fannie Brice likes onions, and doesn't care who knows it. . . . Arthur Caesar is exercising his caustic, yet witty, tongue out Hollywood way now. . . . Arthur Hammerstein, if anyone is interested, always wears brown suits. . . . Harpo Marx now plays selections on the Theremin as well as on the harp. . . . Incidentally, the Thanatopsis Upper West Side Literary and Inside Straight Society misses his poker playing when he is on the road. He is considered their best player, against competition which includes Heywood Brown, Alexander Woollcott, Raoul Fleischman, and George S. Kaufman. . . . Tamiris, the aesthetic dancer, whose real name is Helen Becker, is still growing physically as well as artistically. . . .



# Thirteenth Quinquennial Convention

Name of Order Changed; \$1,600,000 appropriated for B'nai B'rith Activity of next five years; business of vital importance to Jewry transacted; Order to be incorporated; officers re-elected

By EDWARD E. GRUSD

 MORE than 100 delegates from all parts of the United States, and from lands across the seas, gathered in Cincinnati from April 26 to 30 for the Thirteenth Quinquennial convention of the B'nai B'rith, abbreviated the name of the Order, transacted business of vital importance to the Order in particular and to Jewry in general, reconstructed several important B'nai B'rith commissions, and chose once more the same leaders selected five years ago at Atlantic City to guide the destinies of B'nai B'rith to still larger and more significant fields of endeavor.

I. O. B. B., that well-beloved group of initials, has shrunk to half its size—B. B.—by action of the convention, which voted to establish the formal name of the Order as merely "B'nai B'rith," without the words "Independent Order of." This should be a boon to headline writers.

The convention designated \$1,600,000 as necessary for work to be done in the next five years. It also voted to incorporate the Order.

Two of the most important pieces of legislation approved by the delegates are concerned with the reconstruction of the B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation Commission and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. Each necessitated a change in the Order's constitution.

The first of these calls for the creation of a Hillel Commission to take charge of and supervise the Hillel foundations now existing at various universities and such others as may in the future come under the jurisdiction of the Order. This Commission will consist of the President and Secretary of the Order and 15 other members. Five are to be appointed by the President with the approval of the Executive Committee; one will be appointed by the General Committee in each district in the United States, and these 12 will select three others, who need not be members of the Order. The first Commission will hold office until January, 1933, at which time, and every third year thereafter

in the same month, the Commission will be selected in the manner hereinafore stated, and will serve for three years. When any vacancy occurs, the successor is to be appointed in the same manner as the original appointment, and for the unexpired term.

Immediately after its appointment, the Commission will select the chairman, vice chairman, secretary, and any other officers it may deem necessary. It will formulate rules, regulations, and policies for the conduct of the affairs of the Foundations and their activities, and provide for semi-annual meetings. It will have full charge, control, and supervision of all Hillel Foundations and extensions. It will select a national director and all directors and employees of the individual Foundations, and annually recommend a budget which must be approved by the Executive Committee of the Order. No new Foundation may be established without recommendation of the Commission and the approval of the Executive Committee.

The other vitally important change passed at the convention concerning B'nai B'rith commissions provides for the creation of an Anti-Defamation League Commission to take charge of and supervise the work of the Anti-Defamation League. This Commission will consist of the President and Secretary of the Order and 12 other members, comprising one representative from each of the American Districts selected by the respective District General Committees, and three others to be appointed by the President with the consent and approval of the Executive Committee. This Commission will hold office for five years, and vacancies will be filled in the same manner as the original appointments.

This Commission, like the other, will organize itself, and prescribe rules and regulations for its government and administration. Its budget requirements will be made available from time to time by the Executive Committee, at whose meetings the

Commission Chairman will have the privilege of attendance and voice.

\* \* \*

SO NICELY balanced were the arrangements for business sessions and social affairs, that the convention was a huge success from both the pleasurable and profitable points of view. An extremely capable and hospitable local Ladies' Committee, under the chairmanship of Mrs. J. Walter Freiberg, beguiled the time away for the ladies present, with luncheons, sight-seeing tours, and private dinners, while the local Men's Committee, consisting of members of Cincinnati Lodge No. 4, dovetailed the strenuous business sessions of the convention with a series of vastly enjoyable affairs.

After an informal reception for the delegates Saturday night, April 26, at the Sinton Hotel, convention headquarters, the first business session was held Sunday morning. It was called to order by President Alfred M. Cohen who, after welcoming the delegates, called upon Rabbi David Philipson, "Dean of American Rabbis," to deliver the invocation. Addresses of welcome were delivered by the Hon. Myers Y. Cooper, Governor of Ohio; Hon. Stanley Matthews, Vice Mayor of Cincinnati; and Nathan F. Fogel, President of Cincinnati Lodge No. 4. Brother Leo Baeck, of Berlin, addressed the delegation on behalf of the District Grand Lodges outside of the United States. At the request of the President, Brother Lucius L. Solomons, First Vice President of the Constitution Grand Lodge, responded in behalf of the delegates.

Telegrams of greeting were ordered sent to Mrs. Adolf Kraus, Chicago; Mrs. Simon Wolf, Washington, D. C.; Mrs. Boris D. Bogen, Arcadia, Cal., and Judge Josiah Cohen, Pittsburgh.

The high point of this opening session was the President's message. It so excellently covered and evaluated all the activities of the Order, with appropriate recommendations, that at its conclusion the delegates arose and for several minutes cheered this splendid effort.



"I am happy," the President read, in conclusion, "that I was called upon to lead our great Order, rich in works for the promotion of our highest interests and those of humanity. . . . I have come to know as never before the philanthropies of the Order—they are in nearly every land where it has established itself—its wonderful Orphan Homes, caring for children many of whom never knew the warmth of mother love, the indescribable joy of mother fondling. I have visited hospitals without number which the Order wholly or partially maintains, where emaciated children and spent men and women are nursed back to health or soothed as they pass into the valley that leads to eternity. I have watched the fine ministrations of some within our ranks to unfortunates who have lost their way and are paying for it in penal and correctional institutions. . . . I have attended classes of men and women being taught the rights and obligations of American citizenship. . . . I have heard the speech of slanderers of our people and I have listened to valiant defenders within and without our fold, champions of justice for Jew and non-Jew alike. I have seen the chosen youth of our land in schools for higher education assembled under the name of the kindly Hillel, satisfying their longing for knowledge of their faith and of what the Jew has meant to the world; I have witnessed other youths recruited from the busy walks of life preparing themselves under the standard of the A. Z. A. for leadership with full consciousness of their Jewishness. . . . The Order's mission is finding fulfillment. It is uniting Israelites that they may serve in humanity's cause."

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**D**URING the first convention business session it was reported by the committee on credentials, headed by Judge A. B. Frey, that 114 accredited delegates were present. At each business session many visitors appeared, and hundreds of persons attended the social affairs.

At various times welcome breaks in the grinding business routine occurred and each was happy and significant. The first was the presentation of engrossed resolutions to Brothers Lucius L. Solomons, First Vice President, and Jacob Singer, Treasurer, for the completion of 25 years of service in the Executive Committee of the Constitution Grand Lodge. The President of the Order presented the resolutions in behalf of

the Executive Committee, and Brothers Solomons and Singer feelingly responded.

Another interesting variation from formal business occurred when Brother N. Caspi of Jerusalem delivered a short talk in Hebrew. Later he addressed the convention in very good English.

Still another pleasant interlude in the convention proceedings was the presentation of the first membership to Adolph (Daddy) Freund, of Pisgah Lodge No. 34, Detroit, for more than 50 years of membership in and service to the Order. Everyone loves "Daddy" Freund, who is now 84, and his great record in the Order brought him cheers from all assembled. Since 1885 he has missed only one Constitution Grand Lodge Convention.

That night the delegates and their ladies enjoyed a theater party. The second session of the convention was held Monday morning, during which Dr. I. M. Rubinow, Secretary of the Order, read his report. Other reports read at this session included that of Maurice D. Rosenberg on the work of the Washington Bureau; Sidney G. Kusworm on Americanization; Sigmond Livingston, on Anti-Defamation; and Henry Monsky on the Wider

Scope. All were referred to appropriate convention committees.

The report of Dr. Louis L. Mann, Acting National Director of the B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundations, evoked so much enthusiasm that the delegates rose to their feet and applauded vigorously. They asked Dr. Mann a number of questions about the Foundations, evincing their intense interest in the work. During the reading of the report they also rose for two minutes of silent tribute to Brother Rabbi Benjamin M. Frankel, father and founder of the Hillel Foundations, who departed this life since the last Grand Lodge convention.

Archibald A. Marx read the report of the work of the Mexican Bureau of which he is chairman, after which J. L. Weinberger, in charge of the Mexican work for the last seven years, delivered a most interesting address on his experiences.

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**I**N THE evening the Wise Centennial auditorium was crowded for the session to demonstrate the Order's action. Mr. Solomons was chairman of the evening, and he delivered the principal address on the manifold activities of B'nai B'rith, illustrated by lantern slides. "Before the Wall" a one-act play by Iola Zeckhauser and Jack Cassler, was then presented by the B'nai B'rith Hillel Players of Ohio State University. Hillel students wrote, costumed, designed, staged, directed, and acted the play. The final number on the program was a debate between two Hillel boys from the University of Michigan, Ephraim Goldberg and Elliot Moyer, and two A. Z. A. boys, Sol Kanee and Max Cohen, of the University of Manitoba, on the subject, "Resolved, That We Vie with Alarm the Present Status of American Jewish Youth."

The Tuesday morning session heard reports on the A. Z. A. work by its President, Sam Beber; National Jewish Hospital, by Harry Lapidus; and the Leo N. Levi Memorial Hospital, by Mr. Marx, its recent President. His successor, Judge Frey, then addressed the convention on the needs of the hospital.

That afternoon the Rev. Everett R. Clinchy, Secretary of the Committee on Good Will, Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, spoke on the work of his committee. His address was enthusiastically received, and President Cohen thanked the speaker for his able presentation of the subject.

Rabbi Martin Zielonka presented the

## ARE YOU AWARE--

That it costs \$25,000,000 a year to pay for the college education of the 50,000 Jewish youths in American universities, and how much of that stupendous bill American Jewry is repaying?

That in 1820 a namesake of the biblical Noah planned a city to be known as "Ararat" on Grand Island in the Niagara River, New York, as a place of refuge for Jews of the world?

How Charles K. Harris came to write "After the Ball"?

That there exists in Berlin a marvelous museum devoted exclusively to Jewish art?

Why and how Chaim Nachman Bialik has come to be known as the greatest living Hebrew poet in the world today?

\* \* \*

Prominent writers will answer all these questions and many more equally interesting and absorbing to every Jew in the

## JUNE ISSUE

of the

**B'nai B'rith Magazine**

**Don't Miss It!**



report of the Committee on the Mexican Bureau. The recommendation to close the work of the Bureau and appropriate \$1,000 per month until it is taken over by the local committee, was adopted. It was also passed that a monthly subvention equal to the amount raised similarly by local committees in Mexico City be granted for one year to end the relief work in Mexico.

\* \* \*

MORE than 500 persons were present at the formal banquet and dance Tuesday night at the Sinton Hotel. President Cohen acted as toastmaster, and introduced Rabbi Samuel H. Goldenson of Pittsburgh, the only speaker.

Dr. Goldenson's subject was "The Jewish Problem." He said the Jew must sacrifice for and love his faith, his history and his people if he is to meet the Jewish problem, which is as old as Abraham and will endure so long as Jews live.

"No cheap solution can be offered for deep human problems," he said. "So I offer no cheap, easy solution here. The Jewish problem is the problem of a super-normal, spiritual people, sensitive to high values. Assimilation cannot solve the problem, because of the laws of self-preservation and self-identification. The territorial proposal is no solution because no one can solve a Cincinnati or a Pittsburgh question in Asia or Europe. We must meet each problem in character — a chemical problem through chemical principles, mathematical problems by mathematics, and religion through religion. Let us love our problem and accept its burden."

Brother Maurice Hirsch, chairman of the committee on necrology, read his report, after which he called upon Brother Livingston to pay tribute to the memory of Adolf Kraus, President of the Order from 1905 to 1925, which was followed with a eulogy on the late Rabbi Frankel by President Cohen, and a memorial to Dr. Bogen by Brother Solomons.

After Brother Louis Borinstein had presented the report of the committee on fund raising, it was moved that the members of the Wider Scope Committee, at the expense of that body, be authorized to attend meetings of the various commissions and boards in control of undertakings supported by Wider Scope funds.

Brother Louis Fabricant read the report of the Committee on the B'NAI B'RITH MAGAZINE, recommending that

it be continued along its present lines, and this was approved.

Another very important piece of business was the passage of a motion that whenever the Emergency Relief Fund shall reach the sum of \$150,000, in cash in the hands of the Treasurer, all over that sum shall be paid over to the General Fund of the Order, to be dispensed with at the discretion of the Executive Committee; the Constitution was amended accordingly.

The Constitution was also amended so as to permit the chairmen of the Supreme Advisory Council of the Aleph Zadik Aleph, Anti-Defamation League Commission, and the Hillel Foundation Commission, to attend meetings of the Executive Committee with a voice in its deliberations.

A proposal to redistrict the country was offered and referred to a committee to consider revision of the organic law of the Order.

After an address by Dr. Baeck, the convention unanimously re-elected President Alfred M. Cohen; First Vice President Lucius L. Solomons; and Second Vice President Archibald A. Marx.

The following were unanimously re-elected to the Executive Committee: District No. 1, Louis Fabricant; No. 2, Sidney G. Kusworm; No. 3, Jacob Singer; No. 5, Henry A. Alexander; No. 6, Henry Monsky; No. 8, Dr. Leo Baeck; No. 14, Dr. David Yellin. The other overseas districts will later se-

lect their representatives in the Executive Committee.

Jacob B. Kline was unanimously elected Chief Justice of the Court of Appeals, with the following as members of the Court: District No. 1, Joshua Kantrowitz; No. 2, Karl Vetsburg; No. 3, Isador Rosenthal; No. 4, Harry K. Wolff; No. 5, Joseph A. Fromberg; No. 6, Dr. Adolph D. Weiner; No. 7, Ralph J. Schwartz, and also the brethren of foreign districts who are now serving on the Court.

The following were unanimously elected members of the Anti-Defamation League Governing Board: District No. 1, A. K. Cohen; No. 2, Samuel I. Sievers; No. 3, Abraham Berkowitz; No. 4, I. M. Golden; No. 5, Dr. Abram Simon; No. 6, Sigmund Livingston; No. 7, Joseph Morse; and the President named as his appointees on the board Rev. Dr. David Philipson and Leonard H. Freiberg.

The Convention with applause thanked all who had part in making its sessions and its entertainment pleasant; voted to leave the place where the next quinquennial shall be held to the Executive Committee; listened to a parting word from the President; arose while Rabbi Charles S. Levi delivered a fervent benediction; surrounded the President and clasped his hand praying for his continued health and strength, and then adjourned well satisfied with what had been done.

## Among Our Contributors

DAVID GOLDBERG, in this issue, makes his first contribution to the B'NAI B'RITH MAGAZINE. Born in Russia in 1886, he was educated at a Yeshivah there, and after coming to this country in 1909, attended the Polytechnic College of Ft. Worth, Tex., Texas University, and the University of Chicago. During the war he was Jewish chaplain of the U. S. Navy (rank of Lieutenant). Since 1923 he has been Rabbi of Temple Israel, Brockton, Mass. He was editor of the "Texas Jewish Herald" from 1919 to 1923, and still is an editorial writer for that paper; editor, "Boston Jewish Advocate," 1924 to 1926; and a contributor to the general Jewish press. He keeps in constant touch with affairs in Russia, and will again visit there this summer.

LOUIS I. NEWMAN has been Rabbi of Congregation Emanu-El, San Francisco, for the past five years. This autumn he will take up his new duties as Rabbi of Congregation Rodeph Shalom, New York City.

DR. ISRAEL AUERBACH, a university professor in Berlin, is the European correspondent of the B'NAI B'RITH MAGAZINE.

E. DAVID GOITEIN was for many years a lawyer in London, England. Within the past year he left to become editor of the only English daily newspaper in Palestine, the "Bulletin."

HEYMAN ZIMEL, in this issue, concludes his series of articles on Jewish activity in the New York theater. He is a contributor to the general Anglo-Jewish press.

JACOB DE HAAS is a writer and Zionist leader known the world over. From 1896 to 1900 he was editor of the "London Jewish World," and has served on London dailies for many years. In 1896 he became Theodor Herzl's secretary, and has served the Zionist party brilliantly for more than a generation. He achieved distinction by being the first to win Louis D. Brandeis over to the Zionist cause. He has written a number of books on Jewish subjects and biography; the latest, recently published, is biography of Judge Brandeis.

JULIETTA KAHN is Corresponding Secretary for the American Advisory Committee of the Hebrew University in Palestine. After her graduation from the University of Oklahoma she was Corresponding Secretary of the Intercollegiate Menorah Association, and later assistant editor of a scientific magazine.

SHOLOM ALEICHEM, whose real name was Sholom Rabinovitz, was born in Little Russia in 1859, and died in 1917 in New York City. At the age of 21 he was a rabbi. He is the author of poems, novels, and humorous short stories in Yiddish, and earned for himself the enviable reputation of "The Mark Twain of Yiddish Literature."

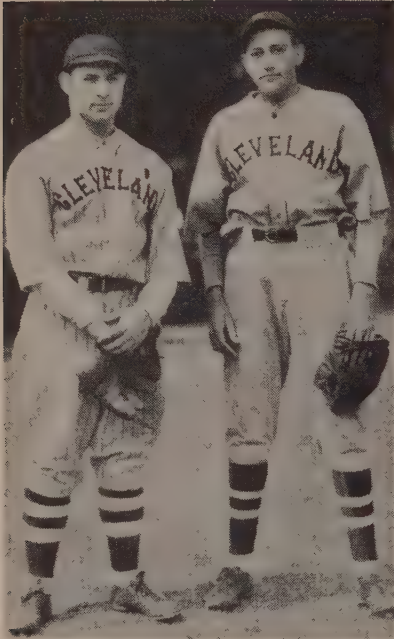
MRS. ETHEL M. KERMAN, whose translation of one of Sholom Aleichem's stories appears in this issue, is the wife of Rabbi Julius Kerman of Sunbury, Pa.

JUDITH STEIN is doing editorial work for the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

EDWARD E. GRUSD is assistant editor of the B'NAI B'RITH MAGAZINE.



# A CROSS SECTION



*The Cleveland Indians are the only big league baseball team which has two Jewish players. They are, left to right, above, John Goldman, short stop, and Charles Aronstein, pitcher.*

THE immigration law which permits more than 150,000 Mexicans, Canadians, Central and South Americans to enter this country annually while excluding the families of certain United States citizens, was bitterly assailed by Congressman A. J. Sabath at the recent Chicago conference of Hias.

\* \* \*

"NO one can now deny that there is such a thing as a culture in Yiddish, and it is world wide," declared Dr. Chaim Zhitlowsky, intellectual leader of the Yiddishists, at the first annual convention of the Yiddische Kultur Gesellschaft in New York City. Nearly a thousand persons, delegates from Yiddish organizations in various parts of the United States and Canada, attended.

\* \* \*

THE accomplishments of Young Judaea, national Jewish youth organization, in educating the Jewish youth of America to a sense of communal and Jewish values, were lauded by several outstanding leaders of American Jewry at its 20th anniversary celebration in New York City. The speakers included Dr. Israel Goldstein, President of Young Judaea; Clarence Y. Palitz; Mrs. Archibald Silverman; Judge Julian W. Mack; Morris Rothenberg; and former Congressman William W. Cohen.

ONE of the most prominent leaders of liberal Judaism in Germany, Rabbi Dr. Hermann Vogelstein of Breslau, celebrated his 60th birthday recently. He is a brother of Ludwig Vogelstein, Chairman of the Executive Board of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and a staunch Ben B'rith.

\* \* \*

NEW YORK CITY'S quota in the \$6,000,000 Allied Jewish Campaign has been set at \$2,500,000 by 100 of the leading figures in the communal and philanthropic life of the city. The quota for the rest of the state is \$350,000.

\* \* \*

DESPITE the official attitude toward religion in Russia, it has been reported that every Jew in Moscow who wanted to celebrate Passover appropriately was able to obtain all the matzoth and other supplies necessary. The holiday passed very quietly in Sovietland.

\* \* \*

"LITVINIZE" is the latest cry in Lithuania. The government has passed a decree that instruction in all private schools must be given in the Lithuanian tongue. This outburst of chauvinistic nationalism seriously endangers the existence of Jewish schools. Despite the pleas of a delegation of prominent Jews, President Smetana's promises of alleviation of the situation have proved meaningless so far, and "Litvinization" continues.

\* \* \*

THE economic crisis in Austria, coupled with the impossibility of emigration, cast gloom over the Passover observance in Vienna last month. There was one cause for rejoicing—the usual ritual agitations did not occur.

\* \* \*

OSIP GABRILOWITSCH, noted pianist, and Mischa Elman, equally noted violinist, were on a program in New York last month for the benefit of the Society for the Advancement of Music in Palestine.

\* \* \*

NEW YORK'S famous East Side, formerly the home of great numbers of Jews, is steadily decreasing in population, according to Edward F. Corsi, census supervisor. Many of the Jewish residents of the well-known quarter have moved or are moving to the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens.

LONDON newspapers, as well as the general Jewish press everywhere, expressed conflicting opinions on the report of the Palestine Inquiry Commission on the riots last August, published last month. The report, while declaring that the Arab attack was not premeditated, placed the blame squarely on the shoulders of the Arabs for beginning the violence without any justification or cause whatsoever in the form of earlier murders by Jews.

\* \* \*

THE Jews of Vienna, where Dr. Theodore Herzl was educated and where he started his Zionist activity, honored the 70th birthday anniversary of the founder of the modern Zionist movement on May 2, 3 and 4, with a great procession to the cemetery where he lies buried, and with other events.

\* \* \*

TEN million persons in the United States are hard of hearing, and with the growth of talking pictures and increasingly interesting sermons being preached in churches and synagogues, they suffer greatly as a result. A campaign has therefore been launched in Chicago, where 300,000 reside who are deaf or



*Mrs. Pelton*

hard of hearing, to provide equipment to remedy this situation. A Jewish woman, Mrs. Louis Pelton, is chairman of the committee for this purpose.

\* \* \*

"I CONGRATULATE you and the congregation of the Wall Street Synagogue upon this first anniversary of its existence and send you my best wishes for the future." President Hoover sent this message to Benjamin E. Greenspan, President of the Synagogue, last month.

\* \* \*

NEARLY 500 persons, including the most prominent members of the community, honored Albert S. Lavenson, Oakland (Cal.) merchant with a testimonial dinner recently for his 40 years of service in behalf of Oakland. Mr. Lavenson is a member of Oakland Lodge No. 252, B'nai B'rith.



# OF JEWISH LIFE

## Jewish Calendar 5690-1930



Rosh Chodesh Nissan.....	Sun., Mar. 30
1st Day Pesach.....	Sun., Apr. 13
7th Day Pesach.....	Sat., Apr. 19
Rosh Chodesh Ivar.....	Tues., Apr. 29
Lag B'Omer .....	Fri., May 16
Rosh Chodesh Sivan.....	Wed., May 28
1st Day Shabuoth.....	Mon., June 2
Rosh Chodesh Tammuz.....	Fri., June 27
Fast of Tammuz.....	Sun., July 13
Rosh Chodesh Ab.....	Sat., July 26
Fast of Ab.....	Sun., Aug. 3
Rosh Chodesh Ellul.....	Mon., Aug. 25
Rosh Hashanah .....	Tues., Sept. 23
Yom Kippur .....	Thurs., Oct. 2
1st Day Succoth.....	Tues., Oct. 7
Shemini Atzereth .....	Tues., Oct. 14
Simchath Torah .....	Wed., Oct. 15
Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan.....	Thurs., Oct. 23
Rosh Chodesh Kislev.....	Fri., Nov. 21
1st Day Hanukah.....	Mon., Dec. 15
Rosh Chodesh Tebeth.....	Sun., Dec. 21
Fast of Tebeth.....	Sun., Dec. 28

AMERICAN Jews were urged to play a prominent part in the international movement to create in Palestine a memorial to the late Earl Balfour, in a cablegram from M. M. Ussishkin, President of the Jewish National Fund, to Emanuel Neumann, President of the J. N. F. of America.

HISTORIANS of the future will have to "write a sad chapter on the decline and fall of American Jewry" unless the emphasis in American Jewish communal life is shifted from philanthropy to Jewish education, Judge Otto A. Rosalsky declared in an address before the annual meeting of the Jewish Education Association in New York last month. Israel Unterberg is President.

THE 33rd annual convention of the Zionist Organization of America will take place in Cleveland beginning June 29. A committee of ten has been named to formulate a new program for Zionism in America, in the light of recent developments in Palestine as well as in this country.

Meyer W. Weisgal, Secretary of the Z. O. A. and editor of the *New Palestine*, has resigned from both posts to accept the editorship of the *Toronto Jewish Standard*.

TWO hundred and seventy-five years ago the first congregation in New York—Shearith Israel, Spanish and

Portuguese—was founded. Seventy-five years later, in 1730, the first synagogue was erected by the congregation. Last month the 200th anniversary of the latter event was celebrated. Rev. Dr. Henry Cobb, pastor of the Collegiate Dutch Reformed Church, the oldest denomination in the city, was the principal speaker.

\* \* \*

"TEN years of our work in Palestine," Dr. Chaim Weizmann, President of the World Zionist Organization, wrote in a letter to the *Manchester Guardian*, "have resulted in an increase of 100,000 Jews in Palestine, while the Arabs, whose numbers had previously been almost stationary, have also increased by 100,000. The entire population is now employed at wages and in conditions much better than have ever been known in Palestine before."

\* \* \*

I. B. JASHENOSKY, Chairman of the Social Service Committee of Zion Lodge, B'nai B'rith, Columbus, Ohio, and unofficial "rabbi" to the Jewish inmates of the Ohio Penitentiary for 55 years, died last month at the age of 79. Officers of Zion Lodge have formed the nucleus of a \$2,500 fund in his honor and memory, to be used in giving financial aid to Jewish prisoners released from the penal institution until they are able to rehabilitate themselves.

## ?? Do You Know That— ??

THE *schatchens*, or Jewish marriage brokers, have organized and incorporated themselves as the Marriage Brokers' Association of the United States.

The land possessions of the Jewish National Fund in Palestine have been increased by approximately 11,000 dunams since the August riots.

Sir Isaac Alfred Isaacs, a member of the High Court of Australia since 1906, has been appointed Chief Justice of that Court.

There are now 813 Jewish schools in the Soviet Union, with 121,117 pupils, whereas in 1926 there were only 509 schools with 70,484 pupils.

By unanimous vote of the Board of Governors Frederick F. Greenman has been elected Chairman of the Board of the Menorah Association, Inc.

The Yeshiva College of New York



Sue Gottlieb (center) of Brooklyn, N. Y., won the title of "Queen Esther" and a trip to Palestine in the recent national beauty contest for Jewish women. Valerie Wald (left) was chosen lady-in-waiting. Miss P. R. Moses, the 1929 winner, is shown at right, placing the crown upon her successor.

SIXTEEN editors of Anglo-Jewish newspapers in the United States and Canada selected Felix M. Warburg, the distinguished philanthropist and leader, to be the recipient of the fifth Gottheil Medal, awarded annually by the Zeta Beta Tau fraternity to the American who has done the most for Jewry and Judaism. The formal presentation of the medal was made in New York City on May 10, when 40 other Z. B. T. gatherings took place all over the country at the same hour.

City will soon inaugurate a national campaign for a \$3,000,000 endowment fund.

Maurice Schwartz, founder and director of the Yiddish Art Theater in New York, has been signed up by the Radio-Keith-Orpheum Circuit for an unlimited engagement as Shylock in an abbreviated version of the "Merchant of Venice."

The congregation of Temple Shalom, Chicago, recently dedicated their magnificent new \$1,750,000 synagogue.

Christian immigrants to Palestine from 1921 to 1929 numbered 6,400, while during the same period 89,900 Jews entered the country.

The National Summer School of Avukah, with Dr. Stephen S. Wise, Louis Lipsky, Jacob de Haas, and others on the faculty, will be held this year from June 26 to July 6 at Camp Scopus on Lake George.



# WE SEE IN THE PAPERS....



JUST who the *ganoff* is in this particular case we do not know. But the fact remains that during the past couple of weeks identically the same editorial has appeared in a number of Jewish weekly papers, and none of them gave any credit for it. Let us assume it is a syndicated editorial.

The article in question is about the resignation from the pulpit of Rabbi Mitchell Salem Fisher, of Congregation Shalom, New York, who complains that none of the rabbis "is the possessor of effective freedom."

"We don't know," says the editorial, "what the young rabbi means by 'effective freedom.' So far as we have observed, there is no pulpit of any religious denomination that accords its ministers a wider latitude of expression on 'the real issues of every-day living and struggling' than the Jewish pulpit . . . Unemployment? Poverty? Crime, prohibition, race hatred, sex, universal peace, health, wages? These subjects and all others that affect the every-day life of men and women are discussed frankly and openly in the Jewish pulpit, and without any restriction by the congregation. We do not believe there is a single congregation in the land that would as much as think of drawing up an 'index prohibitum' on current topics for rabbinical discussion in the pulpit."

Well, not many, anyhow. That is one of the reasons Rabbi Solomon B. Freehof gave as answer to the question "Why I Am a Jew," in a recent symposium in Cincinnati under the auspices of the *American Israelite*.

\* \* \*

**A** LONG the same line as the above, it is significant to note three interviews with three prominent men, two of them non-Jews, which appeared in the Jewish press as syndicated articles during the past couple of weeks. The first is an interview with Sinclair Lewis by Raymond Dannenbaum.

"The puerile, lumbering intelligence of Nordic flatheads needs the leaven of Jewish thought," began Mr. Lewis in his characteristically far from pussy-foot manner. "Thank God that Jews do not believe that suffering, disease, weakness and evil are man's heaven-sent lot. That's why I go to Jewish doctors and dentists. The texture of our national life has been richened, colored, and made more interesting and beautiful by Jews."

No matter who Mr. Lewis was aiming at in his *Elmer Gantry*, apparently it wasn't the Jews.

\* \* \*

**T**HE second interview referred to was with Heywood Broun, by Joseph Brainin. Stating that anti-Jewish feeling in New York is increasing, Mr. Broun revealed that he and George Britt of the *New York Telegram*, had tried to find the reason why, and were now engaged in writing a book on the subject. He declared that discrimination against Jews in hotels and apartment houses is vanishing, but that in business it is a very real menace. Mr. Broun himself tried to learn from employers why they advertised for "Christians only."

"The usual answer," he said to Mr. Dannenbaum, "was that the Jewish holidays interfere with the smooth working of a business organization. But this reason does not carry conviction. The true reason is pure, undiluted prejudice, and prejudices are not based on logic. If they were they would not be prejudices."

This seems to the interviewer an appropriate time to ask Mr. Broun his opinion on Mr. Mencken's attitude toward the Jews, as expressed in his recent book.

"Don't tell me that the Jews are taking him seriously!" answered the columnist, smiling. "The editor of the *American Mercury* is having some fun and is rather pleased that he is getting good publicity for his book. He knows well enough that if you want Jews to read you, you must attack them. That's why the book I'm writing with Britt will not get a tumble from the Jewish readers."

\* \* \*

**T**HE third interesting interview was with Dr. Shmarya Levin, by Freda B. Joel. Discussing the success which is attending his first two volumes on his life, *Childhood in Exile*, and *Youth in Revolt*, Miss Joel asked him why

they had created such a genuine feeling of interest among non-Jews.

"Probably," he said, "because they are not written in an apologetic spirit and because in writing I have attempted to subordinate myself and to give a picture of the cultural development of the Jewish people for the last 60 years."

"But in so doing I had to construct a bridge from the time of the Jews in Mesopotamia to the time when I begin to tell of the Jews in my little birthplace."

"I do not believe in the theory that the Jews as a people are preserved because they suffered a good deal. To me it seems more apparent that it was precisely because the crystallization of the character took place first that the Jewish people was enabled to bear and overcome its sufferings."

\* \* \*

**T**HE Jewish Telegraphic Agency syndicates a weekly article to many papers entitled "In the Public Eye, American Jewish Personalities as seen by a non-Jew." The non-Jew is P. W. Wilson. When President Alfred M. Cohen was in New York recently he was visited by this gentleman, and now an article on him has appeared in the Jewish press.

"Visit him, and at once his popularity is apparent," writes Mr. Wilson. "There he sits, ruddy of countenance and vigorous in physique, a man in the very prime of his influence and opportunity, at ease with himself and on good terms with the whole wide world. . . . It is a simple fact that I was completely deceived as to his age by his appearance. I assumed he was a man in his fifties. But his many friends have recently congratulated him on achieving his seventieth birthday."

All of this is apropos of the President's remarkable conduct during the Thirteenth Quinquennial Convention of the B'nai B'rith the last week in April. It was a most strenuous and grinding job to preside at all sessions for four days straight. On one occasion Mr. Cohen was in the chair from 10 a. m. until 8 p. m. without even a luncheon interlude. Yet when the convention ended, with everyone else peaked and at his fag end, the President was as vigorous and fresh as ever, ready to continue his many tasks. We could add more, but to use the President's own favorite expression, *Dayenu*.

EDWARD E. GRUSD.





*A very interesting colloquy followed between the proprietor and the customer.*

## Translated from the Yiddish of Sholom Aleichem by Ethel M. Kerman

I

**T**HE world-renowned German city, Nuremburg, is an old Jewish community. It is not only a Jewish town, but a religious and God-fearing one. Its Jews have won deserved fame because they never quibbled, never pondered, never philosophized, nor questioned those matters which concern God. Of them it may truly be said that they were Jews pure and simple.

It is true that their Judaism consists of no more than three laws: (1) Yahrzeit, (2) Bar Mitzvah, and (3) Passover. These three dogmas are quite sufficient to preserve the Jewish people for thousands and thousands of years to come. But it is not to be supposed that they sucked this out of their own thumbs; indeed, they had heard it more than once from their rabbi whom the Nuremburg community revered no less than the Catholics do the Pope of Rome, for sooth. They call their religious leader "rabbi," "our rabbi," and the Nuremburg community is convinced that

there is not another such scholar as he in the whole wide world. His sermons, which he delivers in the temple on every festival, are interspersed with such Hebrew words that only the author of the prayer book, were he to arise from his grave, would be able to understand them, perhaps—and maybe not. . . . The Jews of Nuremburg relate wonders of him, much as do Chassidim of their rabbi. For instance, they boast of the fact that in the more than 20 years of his ministry in their community, the Reverend Doctor was never known to have made a mistake. Every holiday he delivers the same sermon with the same texts from the same Biblical portion, with the same interpretation, and the same parables. But I think that must be somewhat of an exaggeration. The authority of the Reverend Doctor in the community is so great that no *yahrzeit*, no *bar mitzvah*, and no festival is appointed until it is first confirmed by him. Although every Jewish inhabitant of Nuremburg has a Jewish calendar in his home, just as every Nuremburg Jewish woman in-

sists on a white kapparah (a fowl offered as a sacrifice for one's sins on the eve of the Day of Atonement) still, when a holiday arrives, no one has implicit confidence in the calendar, but they all go to the rabbi to inquire, "When does the holiday begin?" Not to speak of such a festival as the holy Passover! I am willing to wager that Passover is celebrated in Nuremburg with greater pomp and splendor and with more regard for the ritual laws than in the most observant Jewish community in the world. The Nuremburg women—to them all praise—are so observant that at the theater on Passover they do not use the same opera glasses that they have used throughout the year. The like is true of the men, though they are not so punctilious. It often happened that one or another came to the rabbi to inquire if it be permissible to eat Prague ham on Passover and to wash it down with Munich beer.

Now that we have become somewhat acquainted with the Nuremburg Jews and their Judaism, we can proceed to the gist of the story which took place



in Nuremburg in the year 1908, or 5668 since the creation of the world—according to the Jewish calendar.

## II

WITH the exception of Jewish literature the Nuremburg community supplies its own products and manufactures. Formerly they imported Jewish literature from abroad, mainly from London or Warsaw. But more recently, since the commotions began in Eastern Europe; war, revolution, constitution, and pogroms—the waves of the mighty emigration cast upon the Nuremburg oasis, among many other souls, a peddler or book dealer named Pinhas Pinkas.

Pinhas Pinkas is a small, lively Jew, with one large eye and one small one. When he talks the small eye regards the large, as if to say, "Nu? . . ." And the big eye replies, "No—nu!" At first he suffered enough, starved aplenty, and bore enough pain, affliction, and the contempt of his German brethren, until he finally managed to take up his old calling—that of peddling Jewish books and pamphlets from house to house. Broken, battered, naked and hungry, he had left his native land and it was with great difficulty that he reached a free land—Nuremburg—in which he was secure from pogroms, though not so secure against starvation, for in that free land begging was strictly prohibited even among his own brethren. Every man is obliged to have some occupation. But our battered immigrant, Pinhas Pinkas, was unable to find anything to do in that free land. This was not so much his fault as that of the language. That is to say, neither did he understand their language, nor did they understand his. As first he promenaded in the streets of Nuremburg, observing the city, its inhabitants, the heavens and the earth. He was amazed: here were the same houses, the same people, the same sky, and the same earth—yet, here every one went about so calmly; no one seemed to be in fear of a missile from above, of a bullet from before, or of a knife thrust from behind—fortunate men! a blessed land, indeed.

As time went on, however, the land seemed less and less attractive to him, but that was because of his stomach. The stomach is a tough customer; when meal time approaches, he cares naught for politics or philosophy. "What about me?" asks the empty stomach. "As far as I'm concerned, you may go begging, you may steal, or rob, so long as I get what's coming to me—that's all I'm interested in!" The trouble is that, in order to stretch

out one's hand, one must be a born beggar, or at least have the soul of a beggar. And our hero wandered a long time in the streets of Nuremburg before he summoned the necessary resolution to accost the first passer-by, not, God forbid, to beg anything of him, but just in order to have an opportunity to unburden himself. Pinhas Pinkas addressed the first German in this manner:

"Pardon me, dear Mr. German, I am a stranger here and do not understand the language. I have fled from a 'constitution' and am now at the end of my resources. Believe me, I would not trouble you, were not my situation so desperate. I am not asking you for charity, God forbid; I'm looking for work, for something to do, no matter what, just so I can keep body and soul together. Have pity. . . ."

The German listened to the end but, as Pinhas spoke Yiddish, he replied that he was sorry that he had never heard of such a street, and went his way. The second German heard the same speech and departed without replying. The third one became somewhat angry at being detained and spoke his mind about the "damned fellow." The fourth German did not even let him finish, but showing him that he had a cane, warned him that if he did not "move on," he'd call the police. . . .

And our hero quickly revised his former opinion of the Germans and of their free country which he began to hate, and he became a mortal enemy of Germans.

## III

BUT, if the unfortunate Pinhas Pinkas grew to hate the Nuremburg Germans, he bore a thousand times more ill will and was a thousand times more vexed with the Nuremburg Jews and their Reverend Doctor who propounded to the poor immigrant three questions: (1) Why was he a poor man? (2) Why was he so ragged? (3) Why doesn't he speak German? Thereupon the poor little Jew answered with perhaps too much impudence:

"Your Majesty, I shall answer the first question first and the last, last: As to your question why I am poor and am dressed like a beggar, you are quite right; the Almighty wanted to give me wealth, but I told Him: 'Better give it to Mendelssohn—he is an apostate and has no share in the kingdom of heaven. . . .' But, as to your not approving of my Yiddish, I should like you to be in my position and to come into our parts, to Moscow,

or even to Berditchev, with your German jargon, then you'd see what a just God we have!"

Fortunately, the rabbi understood only a very few words of this whole speech. "Money" . . . "Mendelssohn" . . . "Moscow" . . . and the Nuremburg rabbi began to read him a sermon and to rebuke him, telling him that it was great audacity for such as he to meddle in Russian politics and to criticize Mendelssohn for giving financial aid to Moscow. . . . "That's just your trouble," the rabbi harangued the poor immigrant, "that you push yourselves where you're not wanted. For that very reason you are driven out and we, German Jewish citizens, are put to shame on your account. . . ." And the Nuremburg rabbi wasted many more such wise and earnest remarks, for the little Jew understood still less of his discourse. . . . The result was that, after having been driven out several more times and having been called "schnorrer," "Polish Jew," and similar epithets, our Pinhas Pinkas finally extracted from the Nuremburg community a little loan so that he might order some printed matter from his native land and perhaps earn a little.

And so it was. He ordered a shipment of books and pamphlets, and a few prayer books: Bibles, *Selichot*, and *Haggadahs*, and most important of all, Jewish calendars. He foresaw that he would have more customers here for Jewish calendars than for all other books. Pinhas Pinkas had not spent his time in vain among his German brethren. He understood that the calendar was perhaps the only saleable article of Jewish literature in Nuremburg. In this he made no mistake. He sold the whole package of Jewish calendars in one day and was obliged to write for another shipment of them, and he disposed of that shipment also.

From that time on our Pinhas Pinkas began to extend; that is, he went from one town to another with a pack of books on his back, consisting mainly of Jewish calendars published in Berditchev, Vilna, and Warsaw. But his most important market was Nuremburg, for nowhere else was there such a demand for his wares. When a Nuremburg Jew buys a Jewish book, I mean a calendar, he does three good deeds at once: firstly, he introduces a "Jewish book" into his home; secondly, he thus spreads Jewish literature; thirdly, he gives the poor "Polish Jew" an opportunity to earn some money. And the poor Polish Jew got along quite well. The



st year he disposed of Jewish calendars by the dozen, the second year, the hundreds; the third year, he anticipated selling thousands, and perhaps more—who knows? It seemed shame, though, to have to send for the merchandise all the way from his native land and to have to pay cash for it. It would have been a splendid business if it could have been published right on the spot. And our calendar dealer, Pinhas Pinkas, conceived a scheme—a whole plan, a brilliant, a diabolic plan.

## IV

ONCE, on a beautiful day, as our calendar importer, Pinhas Pinkas, was sitting in a Jewish restaurant, after a substantial dinner, and was picking his teeth, his two ill-assorted eyes regarded each other and carried on a dialogue. That was a sign that he was thinking and that his brain was working. And, in order that the reader may know what Pinhas Pinkas was thinking about, we shall repeat briefly the discourse carried on by his eyes (let us suppose for a moment that eyes can speak).

The smaller eye: "Must order a shipment of calendars for the year 5668 . . . must send away so much money."

The larger eye: "A whole fortune!"

The smaller eye: "That's a crime."

The larger eye: "Sinful extravagance."

The smaller eye: "If an old calendar could be obtained for them. . . ."

The larger eye: "Be it from the days of Terah, just so it's a calendar."

The smaller eye: "The Nuremburg polars. . . ."

The larger eye: "Learned men, geniuses, great minds! . . ."

The smaller eye: "But what if the eyes will be all wrong?"

The larger eye: "What do I care?"

The smaller eye: "It would serve them right!"

The larger eye: "The devil take them!"

The smaller eye: "They made life miserable enough for me until I managed to eke out a living."

The larger eye: "It's time they got their deserts!"

Then Pinhas Pinkas beckoned to the waiter, "Hey you, Dutchman, son of a Dutchman! Bring me a pitcher of beer!" That was as good as saying, "Stein of beer. And our calendar dealer drank a stein of beer and wrote me a letter, of which we here give you a faithful copy:

" . . . And I also write to you, my dear friend, to ask you to be kind enough to include as many old calendars as you can, mostly of the year

5648 (1889). I have a customer for them. The Germans buy old stamps and old calendars. Of course, they pay very little for them, but that's better for you than to have them rot in your attic and have the mice gnaw them. When you pack these calendars, please weigh them and charge me according to the price of old paper and send them C.O.D. Please be sure to send me all your old calendars, as many as you have, and mostly from the year 5648 (1889). I am just doing this to oblige you. I know that you have old calendars lying about and I want to give you a chance to make some money. I am not writing to any one else, because I esteem you highly. Remember, please, send me as many old calendars as possible. My best regards to your wife and children.

From Pinhas Pinkas."

Having sealed this letter, he called to the waiter, "Hey you, Dutchman, son of a Dutchman, another pitcher of cream! . . ." Having received another stein of beer, our calendar publisher wrote another letter to another book dealer:

" . . . Secondly, I wish to inform you that I have stumbled upon a German who buys old calendars, but only of the year 5648. If you have them, please send them to me at once, C.O.D. But don't you charge me any more than for their weight as paper, for I must make something also. I am writing only to you, as I know that only you have old calendars. And, as I have no time, shall make this letter brief.

From Pinhas Pinkas."

He wrote still another letter to another city:

" . . . Secondly, I wish to inform you that I can buy calendars from you this year, only on condition that for each new calendar of the year 5668 (1909), you are to add gratis three old calendars of the year 5648 (1889). For there are a few Germans here who are studying the weather according to old calendars of previous years. Therefore, I ask you to send me all your old calendars of the year 5648, adding to every three old ones a new one at the regular price, sending them out at once, C.O.D.

Your friend, Pinhas Pinkas."

Several more such letters went out to various book dealers in various cities. Then our calendar jobber, Pinhas Pinkas, settled with the waiter, shouldered his pack of books and went his way, like a man who had conceived and executed a good and important deal.

## V

THE year of 5668 (1909) since God created the world, was for the Jews of Nuremburg a year of plenty. All of them, from the leading manufacturer to the humblest artisan, had done good business. All of them, from the greatest broker to the smallest peddler, had made money and all of them were happy and pleased that the "poor Polish Jew" was making money of them, selling them calendars for the year 5668. It is safe to say that there was not a single house in Nuremburg which had not bought from the "Polish Jew" a calendar for the new year. And the Jewish population of Nuremburg observed the new year 5668 (1909) according to the old calendar of the year 5648 (1889), excellently, that is, they observed *yahrzeit*, celebrated *bar mitzvahs*, and kindled the Chanukah light, ate the Purim *Homentaschen*, and began to prepare for the Holy Passover, to bake *matzohs*, just as they were wont to do from the days immemorial—and at the right time, according to the calendar, they seated themselves quite properly for the Seder. And so Passover would have gone and perhaps even Shevuoth, and Succoth, too, if something had not happened (something always happens in every story). And this is what happened:

A certain druggist was obliged to go from Nuremburg to Berlin to purchase goods. He set out on the third day of Passover. When he arrived in Berlin, he was ravenously hungry from the trip. The attentive reader will bear in mind that a Nuremburg German Jew, though he be a druggist, or a dentist, or even worse than a dentist, would not eat unleavened bread during Passover for a billion. Throughout the year he will think nothing of eating pork. And you could prevail upon him to eat lobsters also, and what you will. But, when the holy festival, Passover, comes around, a German becomes frightfully observant! He would rather starve than touch unleavened bread on Passover. Call it fanaticism, if you will—that won't change matters.

Being famished on his arrival in Berlin, our druggist first went in search of a Jewish restaurant on the Friedrichstrasse and, having seen the word "kosher," he was delighted. Arrived within, he had hardly time to seat himself at the table and examine the Passover menu, when a waiter appeared beside him, a husky youth with pomaded hair and bristling mustaches a la Wilhelm II. That rascal of a waiter held a tray in his hands



and on that tray—would you believe it! was a homentasch!

Our druggist was almost overcome: what does this mean? Kosher, Passover, and a homantasch! Were the druggist not starved, he would have imagined that it was all a dream. The waiter, observing his customer's amazement, twirled his mustaches a la Wilhelm II and remarked with the friendly smile of a waiter:

"In honor of the festival—Purim—kosher for Purim!"

Now our druggist became still more confused: in honor of the festival Purim . . . The waiter departed and in his place appeared the proprietor, a well-dressed German with a very ingratiating smile on his fat, red lips. A very interesting colloquy followed between the proprietor and the customer, of which we shall only record the gist. The Proprietor offered the customer greetings of the festival of Purim and the customer tried to persuade the proprietor that it was indeed a festival, but that it was not called "Purim" but "Passover" (Easter). At first the proprietor, thinking that the customer was a wag who was simply making merry in honor of Purim, snickered politely. This snickering of the proprietor's, however, was not at all pleasing to the other and the altercation between them was becoming more and more serious, until it reached the ears of the other diners who also joined in the highly interesting discussion.

Our Nuremburg hero left that restaurant in a huff and went to another, also a Jewish restaurant, where he found the same scene: the same unleavened bread, homentaschen, "kosher for Purim"—and the upshot of the matter was that our druggist went from there to a Gentile restaurant and ordered Gentile food, a la carte. He thought: "Rather than eat unleavened bread on Passover, it would be better to eat non-kosher food." . . .

## VI

AFTER all, one of the most useful inventions of our day is the telephone. Thanks to the telephone, the whole of Nuremburg, in the space of half an hour, was apprised of the fact that the capital of Germany, the Jewish city of Berlin, was a month behind in the observance of Passover; for, whereas Nuremburg was already celebrating the fourth day of Passover, it was only Purim in Berlin! The Nuremburg community was so astonished that they were eager to hear what "our rabbi" would say to that. So they went to the Reverend Doctor whom they found seated at his desk,

inditing a telegram to his colleague who was also a Reverend Doctor. He requested that his colleague wire him at once what holiday was being celebrated in Berlin. The same day, towards nightfall, the rabbi received a clear reply from Berlin. The answer consisted of but "Shusaw Purim" . . . By means of the same telephone, he notified the whole city, asking each one to examine his calendar, to ascertain the date. And the whole city of Nuremburg began to study the calendar with such an interest as if they were bent on discovering on what day the world would come to an end.

The truth must be stated: Nuremburg was a very fine town and its Jewish inhabitants were very honest people—but that has nothing to do with the case in hand: there were not many educated men who could understand the calendar; the only Jewish scholar who could read Hebrew was one who was the bearer of a very distinguished name, Matthew Dreyfuss.

We hasten to apprise the reader, lest he make the mistake of thinking that this is the Matthew Dreyfuss, the brother of the world-famous martyr, Captain (later Major) Alfred Dreyfuss. The Nuremburg Matthew Dreyfuss is the sexton of the local temple and the town *schochet*. How does he come to such a name—don't ask. Why, there's a poor man, in that same Nuremburg, who ekes out a living from the fees he receives for saying *kaddish* and who bears the name of Nathaniel Rothschild. Then there is, also in Nuremburg, of course, a shoemaker, and a cripple at that, who is not ashamed to call himself Heinrich Heine. There is also a barber there whose sign shows a female with a red wig and, in large bright letters, the name: Ludwig Berné. All that's lacking is a boot-black named Baruch Spinoza. It is quite possible that a Baruch Spinoza may be perambulating about there, only I have not yet had the good fortune to become personally acquainted with him . . . But, to return to our learned Matthew Dreyfuss, the sexton of the temple.

When the learned Matthew Dreyfuss heard the story which the druggist brought with him from Berlin, that there it was Purim and not Passover, he began to delve in the calendar with renewed vigor, as befits a scholar who is a sexton, a *schochet*, and a Dreyfuss. He pondered long until he found a little clue. He asked, "What has become of the Second Adar?" According to his calculations, which he recalled from last year, this year was supposed to be—what the devil!—a

leap year. He can prove it by the organist, Friedrich Spielhagen, who is a Gentile and plays the organ in the temple on holidays; no, he, Friedrich Spielhagen, says that they, too, have a leap year this year!

With that valuable data our learned Dreyfuss went to the Reverend Doctor and both of them sat themselves down to study the calendar anew—and here the whole catastrophe came to light. Both of them noticed that their calendar was, not from the year 566 (1909), but from the year 564 (1889). That it was twenty years old.

The author of this true story thanks the honored reader for the trouble he has taken to hear the story to the end and leaves it to his own imagination to picture what happened in the city of Nuremburg when they were informed by the rabbi himself that they had anticipated the Passover by a whole month and that they should have to observe Passover all over again! He could use all the harsh expressions such as: furious, shocked, surprised, wrought up, vexed, enraged, dejected, beside themselves, etc. But I feel that none of these would be correct, they are too banal. The most correct expression, it seems to me, would be "annihilated!" Consider the situation: for all of six months a community has been living according to an old, discarded calendar of 20 years before, had celebrated its holidays on the wrong dates, had eaten matzohs when all the other Jews were engaged in be-laboring Haman! Then what of the *bar mitzvohs*? the memorials for the dead? the *kaddish*? . . . And whom had they to thank for all this? A little Jew, a mere nobody, an immigrant . . . O, that Polish Jew! exclaimed the Nuremburg German Jews and gnashed their teeth at the "Polish Jew." Let him just come to Nuremburg with his pack of books and he'd get what was coming to him . . .

And our "Polish Jew," our boot dealer, Pinhas Pinkas, was at that time sitting, with a great many more such outcasts, on a huge ship which was patiently and noisily swimming from Hamburg to New York. From all that fortune which he had managed to extract from the "Germans," he scarcely gathered together enough for a steamship ticket in the steerage, and he is travelling to the golden land which Columbus discovered so that poor Jew from all over the world, homeless and persecuted, despoiled and outraged, might honestly and honorably, though with great exertion, earn a bit of bread.

Readers! let us wish him luck and a happy and kosher Passover.



# LE MOMENT TERRIBLE

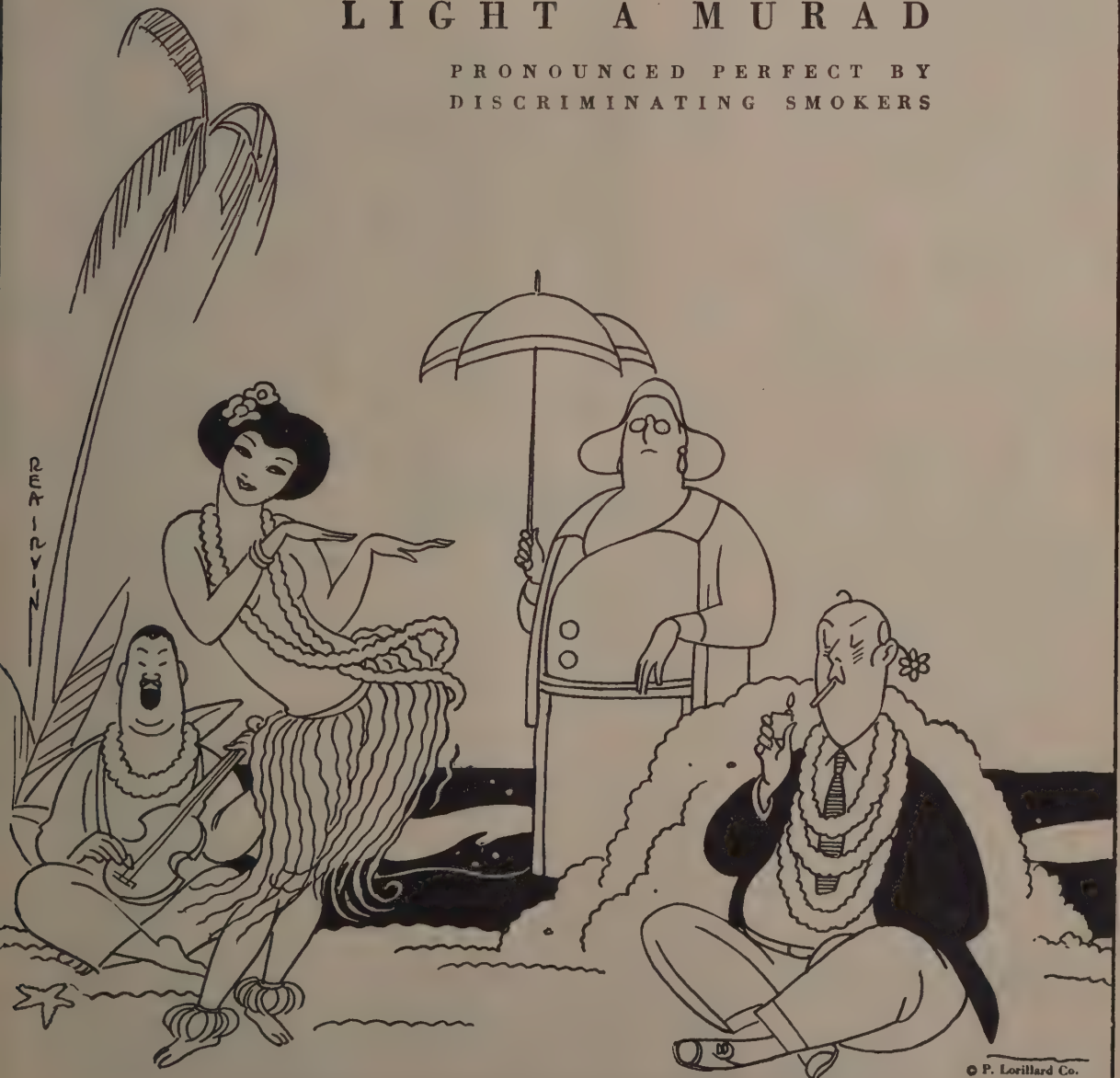
(THE TERRIBLE MOMENT)

If when traveling, you are surprised in a little pic-nic (pronounced peek-neek) by madame (the wife) . . . quelle affaire . . .

*be nonchalant . . .*

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# AROUND THE WORLD WITH MEN...AND BOOKS

by Jacob DeHaas



ONE day in the first week of February, 1919, I meet, in Paris, Sir Mark Sykes. Two months later he was dead, and I in London sick abed with a desperate attack of grippe.

When I recovered the world had moved on and Sykes was forgotten. A few months ago an old friend, E. W. Lewin-Epstein, read to me from an old Hebrew note book the details of his conference with Sir Mark Sykes in Damascus. And now a young friend sends me "with appreciation" Shane Leslie's biography of this knight errant who was more responsible than any other human being for the British policy in the Near East during the great war. Sokolow, I think, has described Sykes as "the father of the Balfour Declaration." That child had a host of parents.

As I recall him, he was a lath of an overtired sick man, in a British officer's uniform, quick, nervous, Celtic in spirit, weary, yet full of enthusiasm. One hundred per cent British with a large paternal air towards all the naughty little irreconcilable races on earth, particularly those of the Near East. Lawrence, with whom I spent some time in Paris and in Cairo, was another of that ununderstandable type of Englishmen, ever themselves, always thinking of Empire yet smitten with the Orient. In all I have known a score such from Holman Hunt, the painter, onward. On reflection you are apt to doubt their sincerity, for what interests them, and the compound of philosophy which is theirs, is out of your orbit. You are even likely in the case of a man like General Storrs, the former Governor of Jerusalem, to regard them as anti-Semites who are to some extent intruding in Jewish circles in order to gain inside knowledge of Jewish life. Most of them, I fear, learn to dislike the Jews before they have made considerable progress in their Jewish affiliations. To regard them as anti-Semites is superficial and wrong. We do not come up to expectations. We fail them at that point at which they

hope most from us. We are not the Semites they have read of, and for whom they are looking with great hope.

Palmer, Lawrence, Sykes, Storrs, Macmahon, Philby, Macnamara (to the list might be added some notable women), are the impassive English, day-dreaming in the bright sun of the Orient. Maybe the difference between grey clouds, damp air, and green seas, sends them into a trance where the skies are blue, the air pellucidly clear and the sea blue with white creamy crests. Perhaps the Bible got under their skins to the point where all life is colored by its glorious sentences. Most of them can recite it with a verve and a quality of reality that leave us dumfounded. Oxford, Cambridge, Downing Street, political careers, imperialism and Isaiah. Smells of hypocrisy? Not a whit. They are of a generation that was schooled in the undefiled fount of English literature, the Bible. Their inbred culture is Jerusalem, Rome and Athens. They "hear the East a-callin'." Kipling understands his kind. He knows they thrill not to the poem but the tinkling bells of Mandalay.

Their nature being what it is their intoxication by the East assumes the sober desire to straighten it out, untangle its races, give a benighted world the blessings of Anglo-Saxon order. You may revile them as bitten with the virus of British imperialism, but you are only half right. For the other half of them is romance, and the spirit of adventure, the wish to keep away from the dour and the drab, to be "in at the death" where things happen, to dream, loaf, ride at neck-break speed, to eat sand with bread, to create and fashion worlds.

Sykes may be set down as a knight errant or as a blundering intriguer, according to your outlook on life. He had a hand in the original British agreements with Sheerif Hussein, he framed with M. Picot the Sykes-Picot Treaty (he objected to the label) and both of them were at the session at which the Balfour Declaration was

first initiated in Haham Gaster's house in 1916. He was at the capture of Bagdad and wrote an English Oriental declaration to the Arabs; he led Allenby on foot into Jerusalem. Being a Catholic he decided that the English commander-in-chief should not enter the Holy City other than as a pilgrim. He tried to knock Jewish and Arab heads together in Damascus in January, 1919, and died a few weeks later while supporting his theories at the Peace Conference in Paris. This is not even an outline of the activities he crowded into the war period.

The interesting thing about him and his kind, is that he solemnly prepared for such a career. He went East as a boy, was impressed with the sun-drenched lands, learned Arabic and by a thousand efforts sought to make himself master of the problems that geographically are located between the mouth of the Danube and the Persian Gulf.

His father had filled him with a love of the Lebanon, and if Mark Sykes had not been an Anglo-Catholic he might have become a Mohammedan. He was as a matter of fact the devout religionist but the sensuous coloring of the East captured him. He was not rich, just well enough off to indulge his own ideas, and believed that he could best serve the world as a political interpreter of the East. To a Jew it sounds fantastic. The Jews have produced no leisure class, no group so sure of themselves and their economic and social status to ignore business or gainful profession, the sheer intellectual curiosity should drive them forth to adventure and knowledge. There are other difficulties. Not the least is that no Jew can say—that would be the argument—I propose to serve the Jews as Sykes meditated serving the British. But the convolutions of the brain produce other reasoning. Sykes rushed into the Boer War. He had no need to. *Noblesse oblige*. His order called him to action. Had the great war not happened in his generation what would all his early camel rides have



duced? Books on the East, tomes of archaeology.

What did Sykes want of the Jew? In December, 1917, he tried at a mass meeting to define his views: "It might be the destiny of the Jewish race to be the bridge between Asia and Europe, to bring the spirituality of Asia to Europe, and the virility of Europe to Asia." He is talking like Mordecai in "Daniel Deronda." But he plunged into realities: "A combination of man power, virgin soil, petroleum, and brains. What is that going to produce in 1950?" It was the subtle play of forces that excited him, the curiosity about that tomorrow that he was trying to construct that urged him on—and the pride of Empire. He had no reserves where his master passion was concerned. Yet his biography shows this actor in world affairs had a whimsical gift of detachment as though he was not as serious as he was thought to be, or summed that air of wisdom of a man of a thousand years old peering down at the play of the little figures on the ground.

A re-maker of worlds, a re-coordinator of mankind, who did not deal with reports and statistics, but with flesh and blood, is surely a fascinating figure. Sykes had none of the mystery of Lawrence about him, and played his colleague at cross-purposes each according to his understanding, and no dire far flung British concept at the bottom of it all. To the contrary all the war books, and this is true, reveal that statesmen are not as astute, but as bungling as the local politician you know, at first hand improvisations. What the British have behind them is not definite purpose but constancy and the readiness of one generation to pick up the threads that fall from the dead fingers of another. The British policy in the Near East as formulated when Napoleon invaded Syria. Yet it was something less than a program. Thereby the schematists are confounded. For at the time the idea looked like the romantic Disraeli, at another like John Bull Palmerston or Aberdeen. The engineering Kitchener — a British masterman if ever there was one — nervous Lawrence and knightly Sykes, philosophic Balfour, religious Cecil. It was the cast of each, in each generation. A baffling variety of expressions supported by persistence.

But that force is not limited to politics. It makes the mystery called "culture." The Englishman writes as much as he acts life. He is not ashamed of being a "scribbler" as well

as an aristocrat and statesman. He reads, ponders, and passes the remoulded thought of one period to the next. His is the written tradition and its exposition is his pride. He does not bind himself by set written principles. He lives them whether we approve or not.

Wherein did the Jews fail him? His concept of them was bred of the Bible, the life of Moses Montefiore, the history of the Inquisition, and the romance of Disraeli. We do not wear like that even if perchance we look like it at short distance. He believed us part of that great placid Orient capable of moving, noiselessly but en masse, swinging into action in response to the trumpet blast he had sounded on Mount Zion, resistless, sacrificing, opening our money bags and showering gold on a redeemed Zion. His biographer says: "It was his Catholicism which assisted Mark to understand the Jewish tragedy. He was interested in the ethos of the real Hebrew, not in the Anglicized Jews."

Who wants to personify "the ethos of the real Hebrew?" And, Jewish-like, we may end by asking what does that ethos look like? Sykes believed he knew. Would we recognize it if it met us on the street?



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# History in Handwriting

Famous Jewish Characters Live Again Through Their Letters

By JULIETTA KAHN



PSYCHOLOGISTS say that the tendency to acquire can be classed as an instinct which, translated into every-day language, may be the reason that the pockets of small boys are crammed with bits of string, marbles, rusty nails, mysterious keys that fit no key-holes, and an assortment of other articles, precious only in the eyes of their owners. Everybody knows the boy or girl who is going through the stamp-collecting age. Some few progress to the autograph stage. But it has been left to a little Jewish lad, in far-away Galicia, to cherish the ambition of securing autographs and portraits of his people, to try to gather a collection such as never existed before.

To dare to dream of rivalling the far-famed collections in the National Library of Paris, or those of the British Museum! In spite of discouragements, scoffing and ridicule, that dream, visioned by a boy more than 33 years ago, has become a reality. The Schwadron Collection of rare autographs, manuscripts and photographs of notable Jewish men and women, housed in the Library of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, is the largest and most complete in the world.

Ignorant that such means as dealers and auctions exist for those fortunate ones who can command funds to buy

a long-sought specimen, young Abraham Schwadron, without experience, without guidance or counsel, began what was to be a life-long task, alone. With the energy and devotion of a born collector, he started in his youthful ignorance by asking every Jewish celebrity within the radius of his little Galician village for his signature for "the album."

Groping, making mistakes, young Schwadron persevered. Finally he learned of the existence of dealers. But his lean purse forced him to confine his purchases to the autographs of lesser lights. Fragments of letters of Lord Beaconsfield and Rahel Varnhagen at \$5 apiece at that time were his most expensive specimens. As for the very high-priced ones, such as Moses Mendelssohn and Heinrich Heine, he had to content himself with gazing sadly and yearningly at their entries in the catalogues. It was not till much later that he was able to replace many of the inexpensive and fragmentary autographs with more important specimens by the same hand.

There began a period of ceaseless work and searching and questioning. "Which of the countless names in the auction catalogues belong to Jews, and which are sufficiently important for this unique collection?" Far away from any libraries or experts, this

*Yes, I trust, further  
complete, the Hebrew  
may never enjoy —  
a Jewish Heine  
from his Hebrew town  
Disraeli*

*Extract in Disraeli's handwriting, from the Schwadron collection.*

determined youth set about his work with the aid of only a few of the simplest reference books.

Then tragedy descended in the guise of a grim trick. His collection grown to about 200 specimens, was entirely destroyed by fire. Only a very courageous spirit could have gallantly begun again, without funds, without encouragement, except from his own fiery, indomitable spirit.

Then the World War broke out. The Russians immediately invaded the village, which lay near the Russo-Galician boundary, and again everything in the Schwadron household was destroyed. But this time the boy had kept better watch over his treasures. Three days before the invasion he had given his collection to his sister, who had taken it with her as she fled to Vienna.

From then on the work steadily proceeded. Nothing, not even the war, was allowed to interfere with this avocation (by profession Dr. Schwadron is a chemist). Soon the catalogues had little to offer him, for he already had the more common specimens. Now the search had to go beyond the dealers' lists.

Discovering bit by bit the magnitude of the task he had set himself, Schwadron learned to advertise in the collectors' journals. He sent out hundreds of lists of desiderata, and approached the relatives and friends of celebrities. He saw some of them in person, traveling about from place to place to reach them, sending literally thousands of letters to the rest. His enthusiasm was unflagging, kept alive by his own dauntless spirit, despite the difficulties which stood in his way, and the almost universal apathy with which he was met. Some of those whom he counted among his best pros-



*Wolffsohn Memorial Library, which houses the Schwadron Collection*



cts simply did not answer. A Vien-  
se colleague, who had promised to  
a certain errand, did not reply  
til he had been reminded twelve  
mes. And often those who were  
e most enthusiastic contributed the  
ast assistance.

The difficulties were probably partly  
e to the fact that the means at his  
posal were always modest. To ob-  
in the more valuable specimens, Dr.  
chwadron calculates that over a  
ndred different steps were required.  
ring the last 30 years over 65,000  
sters and printed circulars have been  
nt out in the interests of the collec-  
n.

While the collection of autographs  
Western European Jewish notables  
the fields of literature, science, and  
t was difficult enough, it was much  
rder to obtain specimens of the  
nd-writing of Eastern celebrities,  
e great majority of whom until re-  
ntly were Chassidic rabbis or Tal-  
dic scholars,

So the only way open was what  
oved to be almost a house-to-house  
nvass. Vague rumors had to be  
acked down most painstakingly.  
re chance was responsible for suc-  
s many a time. An infinitely diffi-  
lt and thankless task, with small  
ults. To add to the hopelessness  
the search, letters of Eastern Euro-  
an Jewish celebrities are usually  
ry rare.

Fire has always been an enemy of  
nscripts, but nowhere has the en-  
ty of fire been more disastrously  
strated than in the ill-built and  
ddled ghettos of Europe. Migra-  
n has always been an enemy of  
nscripts and never has migration  
n more constant than among the  
ws of the East and the West. Po-  
oms, attacks, and wars have lessened  
e chance of preservation. But as a  
ult of the zeal of this collector,  
Hebrew University collection now  
cludes over 2,800 autographs and  
re than 1,400 portraits from East-  
Europe.

Autographs alone were by no  
ans made the sole object of Dr.  
awadron's search. The collection  
tains countless letters whose con-  
ts are of exceeding interest, often  
historical value. Among the latter  
re is a long letter from Heinrich  
ine to his friend Moser, in which  
says:

*"I am leading an isolated life. . .  
th Christians and Jews hate me. I  
ry much regret having been bap-  
ed. I have as yet noticed no im-  
vement in my position, quite the re-  
se. Is it not stupid? No sooner am*

*I converted than I am denounced as a  
Jew."*

Then there is a letter by Moses Men-  
delsohn, that enlightened, brilliant  
18th century Jew. He writes to his  
friend Herder on the training of his  
children as Jews. And still another  
letter from the same hand (written in  
German-Hebrew characters) in which  
he writes that his Breindel (later  
Dorothea Schlegel) is "*not pretty but  
clever and well-bred,*" and he ex-  
presses the hope that his Josef "*will,  
with God's help, surpass them all.*"

There is another document in the  
collection of especially tragic fate . . .  
a letter of Emin Pasha, the German-  
Jewish physician who later became the  
Anglo-Egyptian Governor of the Su-  
dan. Writing from Lado on the Up-  
per Nile, on April 13, 1882, he tells  
a German friend to whom he is send-  
ing objects of scientific interest:

*"Before the post-office closes. The  
steamer leaves here tomorrow . . ."*

This was the last steamer to leave  
for Khartoum, the last that might have  
saved him. He still had many strug-  
gles and adventures to go through un-  
til he was killed by the Arabs.

The scope and extent of the auto-  
graph collection is measured by such  
distinguished names as Disraeli, Prime  
Minister of England, and his father,  
Isaac Disraeli; Heinrich Heine, his  
mother Betty, his sister Charlotte  
Embden, his brother Max and his  
uncle Salomon; Rahel Varnhagen, who  
presided over the most brilliant salon  
in Berlin during the 18th century; Da-  
vid Sintzheim, President of the San-  
hedrin of Napoleon; Moses Mendels-  
sohn, philosopher and founder of Lib-  
eral Judaism, and his distinguished  
grandson, the composer, Felix Mendels-  
sohn-Bartholdy; the famous Rabbi  
Elijah, Gaon of Vilna; the historian  
Graetz; Steinschneider, bibliographer  
and orientalist; Geiger, the philologist;  
Moses Montefiore, the English philan-  
thropist; Herzl, founder of Zionism,  
Ben Yehuda, perhaps more than any  
other man responsible for the revival  
of Hebrew as a spoken tongue.

The arts and sciences are represent-  
ed by many well-known names. Max  
Nordau, and Arthur Schnitzler, dra-  
matists; among the musicians, Ruben-  
stein, Offenbach, Mahler, Meyerbeer;  
the two most famous French actresses,  
Bernhardt and her predecessor, Ra-  
chel; Josef Israels, the Dutch artist,  
and of a later school, Pissaro and  
Chagal. Bergson, Wasserman, Alfred  
Adler, Freud, are a few of the scien-  
tists listed. Among the Library's most  
precious possessions is the original  
manuscript of Professor Alfred Ein-

stein's "Theory of Relativity." One's  
eyes grow dizzy as he scans the cata-  
logue, picking out an item here and  
there from a choice so rich that to  
name one is to omit countless others  
of equal fame.

And the work has by no means  
ceased. Now others have recognized  
the value of Dr. Schwadron's pioneer  
work, and there is now a steady stream  
of gifts which come sometimes from  
living persons, sometimes from the  
archives of a distinguished family. Re-  
cently Professor Sigmund Freud sent  
a manuscript in his own handwriting,  
an essay on S. Ferenczi, himself one  
of the leading exponents of the new  
school of psychologists, and a former  
pupil of Freud's. A short while ago  
the University opened what will be  
known as the "Einstein Archives," and  
friends and admirers of the great  
scientist have been asked to contribute  
books, letters, manuscripts and por-  
traits.

One of the most precious gifts the  
University received for the Schwadron  
collection was the Visitors' Book of  
the Rothschild Hospital of Jerusalem,  
covering the first 60 years of the Hos-  
pital, which was founded in 1856. Not  
only does this book contain signatures  
which make it priceless, but it forms  
a resume of the upbuilding of modern  
Palestine. Among the most notable  
names signed in the Hospital's list of  
visitors is that of the Arch-Duke Fer-  
dinand, one of the tragic family of  
Franz Josef, and at the time of his  
visit to Palestine, Heir Apparent to  
the Austrian Throne. Ernest Renan,  
historian, author of the "Life of  
Jesus," and many another famous name  
is there.

Distinguished visitors to the Uni-  
versity itself have contributed not  
only their autographs, but sometimes  
manuscripts. Emil Ludwig, German  
author and journalist, who lectured at  
the University this past winter, has  
promised some of his letters for the  
collection, and his name in the Vis-  
itors' Book of the University stands  
next to that of Rudyard Kipling. A  
year or so ago, Princess Mary of Eng-  
land visited the University and con-  
tributed her autograph. Last spring,  
on the 25th anniversary of the death  
of Theodor Herzl, the University ex-  
hibited a collection devoted to his man-  
uscripts, documents and letters per-  
taining to the formation of the Zion-  
ist movement. Included in the display  
were papers relating to the Herzl  
Delegation's interview with former  
Kaiser Wilhelm, about the Palestinian  
settlement, when he visited Palestine  
in 1898.





# JEWS IN FAR-AWAY PLACES

by JUDITH I. STEIN



CCORDING to Dr. Nelson Glueck, of the faculty of the Hebrew Union College, the incomparably improved conditions of Palestine are reflected noticeably in the Yemenite Jews who have migrated there. Dr. Glueck, who returned recently from a long sojourn in Palestine, became personally acquainted with many of the Yemenites who have for centuries been the objects of fearful persecutions at the hands of the Moslems.

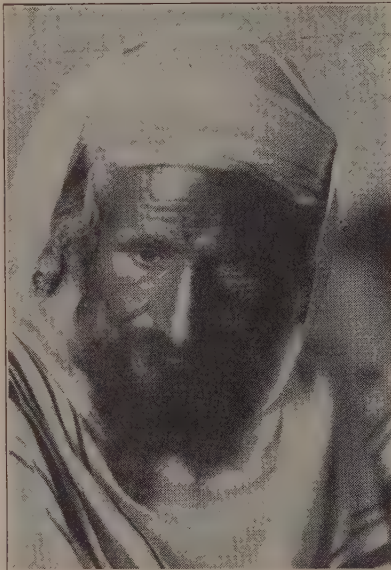
Dr. Glueck reports that the Yemenite Jews in Palestine have become more stable financially, their mortality rate has fallen, and their birth rate has risen. Many of them have been settled in agricultural centers, where they are happily employed on farms.

Speaking of the customs of these Jews who fled from Yemen, a province in the southwestern part of Arabia, where Jews have been living for more than 2,000 years, Dr. Glueck said:

"It is not an unusual sight to see some of the Yemenite Jews carrying furniture and other heavy burdens on their backs. They do the menial work of the community, and they do it cheerfully, because they are used to it, and because their lot is so much easier in Palestine than it was in Yemen. Others who were artisans before, continue their trades in their new home. Still others are happy, and successfully employed at agricultural labor in the Jewish colonies. All the Yemenite men have been given some sort of employment; their wives wash and bake for the colonists, and their children find odd jobs for their spare moments.

"The Yemenite Jews are a welcome addition to Palestine. They are a strong people, used to hard work, but

## YEMEN



*A Yemenite Jew*

nevertheless a cultured people. Speaking Arabic as well as Hebrew, they serve as a connecting link between the Jews and the Arabs.

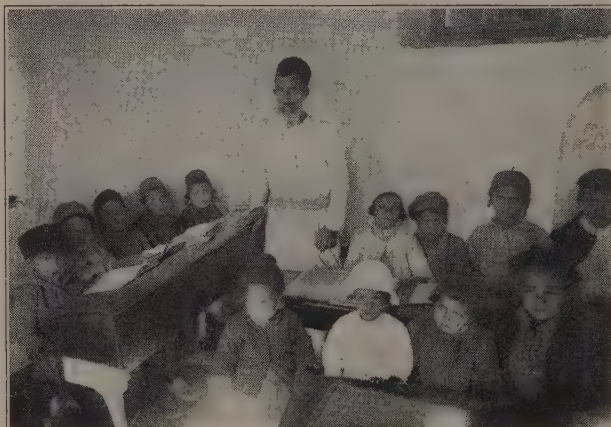
"There are now nearly 15,000

Yemenite Jews in Palestine. After having kept their faith alive for hundreds of years, in the face of the most harrowing persecution, they have come home at last."

But while those who have been successful in finding their way to Palestine have found better living conditions, a recent edict issued in Yemen itself proves that 20th century tolerance has in no sense lightened the burden of the Jews who have remained there. This edict makes it obligatory for all Jewish children to embrace the Moslem faith upon the death of their fathers.

The reports of this new degradation of the Jews were confirmed by Rabbi Abraham Eidue, a Yemenite Jew who is visiting this country. Word has reached him that his niece and nephew were taken over by the Arabs of Yemen after the death of their father, in conformity with the recent law. Every means were tried to convert them to Mohammedanism. One of the children died after being starved in prison for a week, and the other, although still alive when the letters were sent to America, stubbornly refused to desert his faith, and has probably died since.

Other reports from Jerusalem give details which are almost unbelievable in their cruelty. The police, in their endeavor to carry out and enforce the edict, make a thorough and vigorous search at regular intervals for all Jewish boys and girls whose fathers have died. The orphans are brought before a specially appointed government officer whose first task it is to try to persuade the youngsters to embrace the Moslem faith voluntarily. When the attempts at initiating them into the teachings of the Koran fail—and they are generally unsuccessful—the



*A Cheder in Yemen, where the little ones are taught so strong a love for their religion that few are converted, even under the monstrous Moslem laws.*



children are severely beaten. When the beating does not help they are imprisoned in cellars, where they are fettered and threatened with death unless they consent to be converted.

Despite these drastic measures only Jewish orphans have been converted since the issuance of the order.

A particularly distressing case was the conversion of a brother and sister, after six weeks of terrible torture. The Jewish community endeavored to rescue the children by offering a considerable ransom. The offer was not accepted because of the stringency of the enforcement policy. Hundreds of Yemenite Jews assembled around the building at the hour when the conversion ceremony took place. Terrified though they were at what their eyes beheld, the oppressed and intimidated Yemenite Jews did not dare raise their voices in protest.

This abject submission is characteristic of the Yemenite Jews. Since the beginning of the sixth century, 100 years after their migration to Yemen, they have been the victims of the utmost degradations and cruel persecutions. As the centuries went by they became more and more submissive, but their integrity to their faith became fortified through their suffering.

At that time they were about 3,000 in number. They had adopted the customs of their new home, but not the Moslem religion. Because of their superior education they took an important part in the life of Yemen. With their knowledge of craftsmanship, their commercial ability, their industry, and their bravery in times of war, they were popular with the Arabs, many of whom became followers of Judaism.

Jewish rule became supreme in the province. Christian Constantinople did not relish the idea of a Jewish kingdom, so in 525 C.E. it incited neighboring tribes against the Jews, and the last shred of their political power was wrested away.

Their decline was rapid after this date. Their religion was the main cause of their suffering, and they might have escaped by accepting apostasy, but they clung tenaciously to their own faith.

Nothing more is known about the Yemenites in medieval times. But when the cloud of mystery which enveloped them was lifted centuries later, a scene of appalling misery and degradation came to view.

From reports of Jewish travelers

and explorers the details of the miserable existence of the Yemenite Jews came to the attention of the more civilized world. In the 19th century there were in Yemen about 8,000 families, comprising some 30,000 persons, scattered over a few hundred places. So terrific was their struggle for existence that their modest requirements were shocking to their more fortunate brethren. Even a "rich" Yemenite did not eat more than one course at a meal on a week-day, and those who migrated to other countries had to be taught to eat an adequate meal. But despite their modest needs and their industry, they were unable to earn a living, and most of them were without resources and food a great deal of the time. Their dwellings were also proof of their poverty; there was a complete lack of furniture, crockery, bedding, food, and clothing.



*A Yemenite Boy*

Even at the present time the Arabs continue to direct ridiculous and insulting regulations as to clothes and social rules against the Jews. The latter are not permitted to live in fortified towns—thus enjoying the protection of the city walls—but must live outside in dark dwellings like prison cells or caves, in fear of murderers and robbers. Those who have money or valuables must conceal them in secret holes so that nobody may see them.

The Jews are not permitted to wear white, red, or green clothing—the dress of the ruling class. They generally garb themselves in a single garment like a nightshirt. Only on the Sabbath and on Jewish festivals, when they remain in their dwellings,

with no Moslem present, do they clothe themselves in white garments. The rich Jews must also appear poor, so as not to evoke envy and expose themselves to robbery.

If a Jew meets a Moslem of any class whatever he must greet him and address him as his master. If he does not, he is beaten without mercy. A Jew is not allowed to ride upon a donkey, still less upon a camel, but must go on foot like a slave, even when he has a long journey to make. Jews may not sit down in the presence of Arab notables.

The Yemenite Jews are not allowed to have synagogues, but they assemble for worship in private houses. There is a widespread knowledge of sacred Jewish literature among them. The rabbis are not only learned Talmudists and Cabalists, but they are artisans as well. Their native speech is Arabic, but knowledge of Hebrew is universal. Because of their poverty, the Yemenites possess few of the sacred books. Thus, their children are trained to read not only in the normal way but upside down and from any angle, so that one book may be used by several persons at the same time.

Every Jew who can, sells his belongings, with the meager proceeds emigrates to Palestine. At first their condition in Jerusalem, which it often took them seven months to reach, was as unhappy as it had been in Yemen. The Jewish community there was small and without great resources. They had to spend their nights in the open air. Gradually they found employment at house-building and other trades, and learned to cope with the housing situation. Other immigrants followed, the peak coming in 1912, when 2,000 Yemenites settled either in Jerusalem or Yaffa.

It seems little less than miraculous that this isolated band should have been able to survive the endless persecutions of centuries of Moslem rule. An ordinary group of men would never have been able to withstand such martyrdom. Jacob Saphier, who was sent to Yemen some years ago to study conditions there, said of them:

"Outwardly, it is true, they are crushed, hunted, beaten, and their lives are full of sorrow and despair. But when we observe their clean, quiet, and modest life at home—their industry, their fine habits, and customs, their deep devotion to their religion,—we feel like crying out, *How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob. thy dwelling places, O Israel!*



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# THE PRINTED PAGE

## AN EPIC IMPOSTURE



Sabbatai Zevi, by Sholom Ash. A Tragedy in Three Acts and Six Scenes with a Prologue and an Epilogue. Authorized translation by Florence Whyte and George Rapall Noyes. (Jewish Publication Society.)

FEW occurrences in the history of Jewry, so replete with tragic occurrences, have been fraught with greater significance than the advent in the 17th century of Sabbatai Zevi, a false prophet with messianic pretensions, ending in ignominy, made of Zavel a laughing stock among the nations.

These are the facts in brief. Of Polish descent, born in Smyrna in 1626, Sabbatai Zevi, son of a poor poultry dealer, became a Talmudist and Cabalist, a typical Jewish mystic of the time, practicing asceticism and mortification of the body, which practices, it was assumed, put holy men in closer communion with God and his angels and even enabled them to perform miracles. His two early marriages were dissolved on application of his wives; the cult to which he longed bound him to chastity. He experienced many self-imposed rigors, fasted a great deal, and lived in a constant state of ecstasy. The age was full of messianic expectancy both for Jew and Christian; there was a prophecy of the approach of the apocalyptic year, the year 1666. Pseudo-holy men, evoked by a superstitious age and nursing a wish which was father to the thought, put it into Sabbatai's head that he was the long-expected Messiah. Unsure of himself at first, every passing event confirmed him in the idea. It is very likely that ultimately he really became convinced that destiny had chosen him for the task of dethroning kings and reuniting the Jews on their native soil. At all events, there is no record which states with any certainty that at this period the imposture was a conscious one. It looks very much as if he were a poor, self-deluded soul, encouraged by other self-deluded souls, and here and there by a genuine impostor. There was something naive, even heroic, about the whole performance; and insofar as it moved Sabbatai to attempt fantastic, incredibly fantastic deeds,

his figure gained an epic dignity, which drew to him men from all parts of the earth. No one can deny the absurdly quixotic element which eventually, in the fatal appointed year, was to urge him, accompanied by a host of devoted disciples, to Constantinople, there to depose the Sultan and usurp the throne as the Jewish King of Kings. There must have been something about the man that made the Jewry of the world believe in him. And, with the Jewry behind him, heaven alone knows what he might not have done—if—if—well, there's a woman in the case. There always is. Fortunate was Don Quixote that he did not have Dulcinea with him! But our Sabbatai was foolish. This ascetic, who had discarded two wives and chose the Torah as his bride, picked up with a girl named Sarah—she had suffered in a pogrom, had been sent to a nunnery, and later lived the life of a cocotte in Leghorn—whom he made his wife. And why? Because it was a part of the prophecy. At least it pleased his prophets to believe so, and it was quite easy to make him believe. Indeed, he appeared quite eager. Moreover, in this instance, the fact had its precedent in that the prophet Hosea was commanded to wed an unchaste woman. The sort of end Sabbatai suffered was, of course, inevitable. We know that on the pain of death our would-be Messiah turned Turk and became Mahmed Effendi, doorkeeper to the Sultan at a good salary, and that he ended his life in Albania, whither he was banished, in loneliness and obscurity.

Such are the bare facts of this banal-fantastic, petty-epic, heroic-ignominious life. It's a pretty tale for a novelist or a dramatist, and how few Jewish writers have attempted it! We have Israel Zangwill's account, *A Turkish Messiah*, in *The Dreamers of the Ghetto*, which is good enough in its way, being well documented

and full of relevant and irrelevant detail, but lacks a high order of poetic conception necessary to a masterpiece. Now we have Sholom Ash's interesting play which does provide an adequate poetic conception, rendered in poetic prose, but lacks the convincing realistic detail so ample in Zangwill's version. Let some Jewish genius come forth and join the essences of the two! Yes, and add something of his own besides. And that something is very essential, too. Without it, either version misses fire in the one thing we want very much to know. Really, what sort of man was this Sabbatai Zevi thus to draw men and women to him and make them bow to his blasphemies? What sort of woman was this Sarah who could induce him to believe that she could play priestess to his priest? We know so little about the two protagonists. We are given to know that they do this and that, but little or nothing of what they are. In short, they remain puppets; though Mr. Ash does try to give us an inkling of that mysterious something that moves them both. But it should not remain mysterious; surely Sabbatai and Sarah were beings of flesh and blood, and not merely abstract creations expressing abstract thoughts. Nevertheless, we are thankful for these thoughts, because in Mr. Ash's version they not only make logical the actions of the leading characters but tend to give them the epic stature demanded by drama played on so colossal a scale. This is especially true of the climax. That last faltering doubt which still shows Sabbatai hoping against hope for an eleventh hour miracle is the right note conceived by a true poet, and in a sense it gives the keynote to the whole action.

There are throughout some superb passages—in the poetical and ideological sense; they make good reading in a translation which is, on the whole, rhythmic and smooth. I note that the translation is made from the Russian. It would be interesting to know if the author wrote this work in the Russian, or if the original is in Yiddish or Hebrew. A translation of a translation is not an approved practice, and I trust such is not the case in this instance.

JOHN CURNOS.



## PROFESSOR WOLFSON ON CRESCAS

**Crescas Critique of Aristotle**, by Harry Austryn Wolfson. (Harvard University Press.)

**H**ASDAI Crescas was born in Barcelona in 1340, and died in Saragossa in 1410. His fame as a medieval Jewish philosopher of originality was for a time unrecognized, so much so that Solomon Munk in his pioneer sketch of Jewish philosophy does not even mention the name.

In 1886, a few years after Munk's sketch was published, M. Joel, a rabbi in Breslau, published a monograph in which he vindicated a place in history for Crescas and pointed out that next to Maimonides and Gersonides (Levi ben Gerson) it was Crescas who influenced Spinoza most. Since then the fame of Crescas' semi-deterministic ethical doctrine and his points of contact with Spinoza have been especially emphasized. Suggestions have also been made of similarities between Crescas and Giordano Bruno.

The philosophical work of Crescas is entitled *Or Adonai* (The Light of the Lord), and its principal motive is to substitute a more traditional view of Judaism for the intellectualistic-hellenistic view of the Maimonidean School.

The critical part of the *Or Adonai* is the most difficult. It deals with such abstract and technical matters as space, time vacuum, infinity, motion, matter, form, etc. Crescas takes one after the other of the propositions laid down by Maimonides, gives the Aristotelian proofs, and then proceeds to demolish them, incidentally suggesting other views of the nature of these abstract entities. The criticisms of Crescas are not absolutely original, some of them had been advanced before, and they led to the ancient theories of the pre-Aristotelian philosophers, especially Democritus, the exponent of the atomic theory.

The bulk of Wolfson's book under review is taken up with the critical part of the *Or Adonai*. He has given us a critical text based upon manuscripts and early editions, and has supplied an English translation. But he did a great deal more. A translation would not facilitate the understanding of the text very much. Material of this sort requires a commentary, and Professor Wolfson has given us no less than that, and an admirable commentary it is; in fact, all that a commentary on a text of this sort should be. It is the most

thorough commentary on a Hebrew philosophical text that has yet appeared.

To understand Crescas in this part of his work, dealing as it does with notions and arguments more or less obsolete—space and time, etc., are not obsolete, but the theories of space and time held by Aristotle and certain medieval authors are—it is necessary to place oneself in Crescas's position, which means to have assimilated the literature on this subject which Crescas himself read. Most of these writings are in manuscript and have never been published. Professor Wolfson spent two years abroad before the war, collecting this unpublished material; and the result of his labor of classification and digestion of this rare material is presented to us in the notes of the volume under review. They are valuable not only for the elucidation of Crescas's text, but giving us as they do the history of doctrine and discussion from Aristotle down to Crescas, they are invaluable for every student of medieval philosophy who is not satisfied with secondary sources. The whole is summed up in the author's introduction, and the indices and bibliographies at the end combine to make this book a model of sound and thorough scholarship such as many a student will try in vain to emulate.

ISAAC HUSIK.

\* \* \*

## GETTING UP IN THE WORLD

**Jump!** by Don Glassman. (Simon & Schuster.) \$3.

**D**ON GLASSMAN originated in St. Louis, specialized in geology at the University of Missouri, took graduate courses in Chicago, was a reporter in Cincinnati, traveled around Europe, free-lanced for the Jewish and general press in Washington, D. C., and ended up in New York by writing this history of the parachute, and tales of the Caterpillar Club. All the intensity and what he is pleased to call "bellicosity" he formerly put into his writings on Jewish subjects he has infused into this unique volume.

The history of the parachute, which is hundreds of years old, is an absorbing one. The tales of the Caterpillar Club can be described by no other word than thrilling. The Caterpillar Club, in case you don't know, is composed of all persons who save their lives by jumping from disabled aircraft with parachutes. Glassman has personally interviewed these elect, and dashing describes their narrow

escapes. Appropriate photographs illustrate the volume.

EDWARD E. GRUSD.

\* \* \*

## WE WON'T

**Don't Call Me Clever**, by Lawrence Drake. (Simon & Schuster.) \$2.50.

**A**L LASKOV, prosperous real estate dealer of Milwaukee, hates the word clever. To him, a race-conscious Jew trying vainly to be Americanized, the word connotes shadiness. His brother Nathan, a futile intellectual, can describe him in no other way having the same connotation in mind. Just what Nathan is after is not made clear.

This constitutes the novel, although the jacket blurb purrs that "it differs radically from the conventional 'Jewish novel' in that it develops in terms of a set of vital characters rather than in terms of a thesis or problem." No wonder this kind of publicity is called blurb. The only worthwhile part of the book is a story told by Nathan to a girl friend about an amusing town liar back in the old country. *Mach shabbus damit.*

EDWARD E. GRUSD.

\* \* \*

## A MINE OF INFORMATION

**The 1929 American Year Book** (New York Times Co.) \$7.50.

**F**OR scholars, editors, publicists, students, statesmen, writers, and the general public this latest edition of the American Year Book, recently published, will prove a gold mine of information. It contains more than 800 pages of narrative articles and statistical material in the fields of current history, science, industry, art, literature, economics, government, politics, labor, sciences, professions, arts, and religion, written by 200 leaders in their respective fields.

E. E. G.

\* \* \*

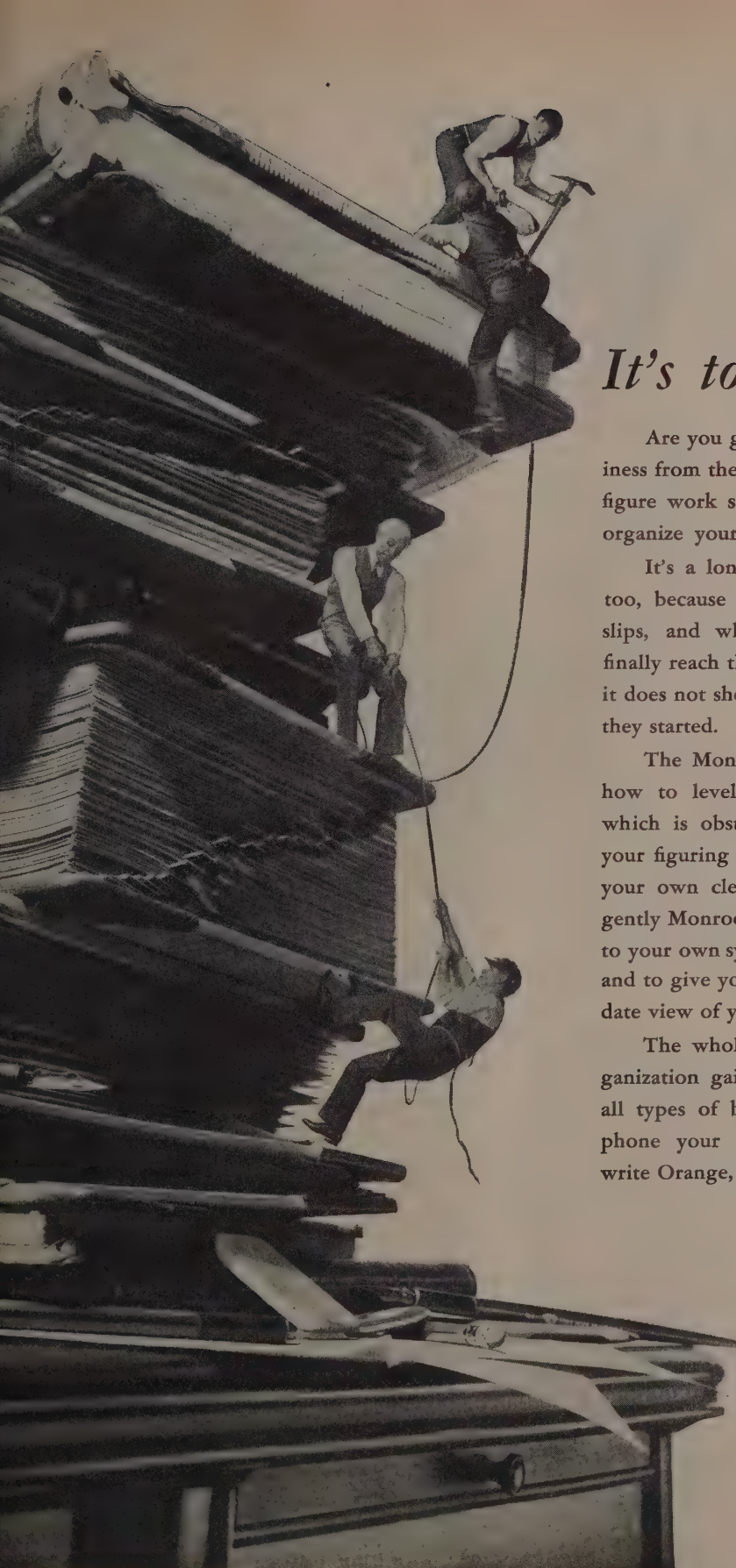
## EX CATHEDRA

**Unpastoral Lyrics**, by Abraham Burstein. (Bloch.) \$1.50.

**A**BRAM BURSTEIN is Vice President of New York Lodge No. 1, B. B., and Rabbi of Inwood Hebrew Congregation, New York City; but there is nothing of solemnity in his latest slim little volume of light verse. With the exception of a few sentimental pieces, all the verse is of that filmy, punny, funny, and clever quality which makes the columns of F. P. A. and Ted Robinson so delightful to read. Indeed, practically all the verses in this book have previously appeared in such columns.

E. E. G.





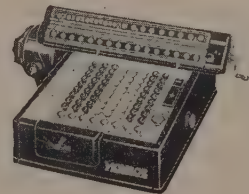
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# ACROSS THE SEAS

A REMARKABLE experience awaits any visitor to the Paradise of the Pacific, the Hawaiian Islands, if he be interested in Jewish life. In this glorious spot nature is lavish in her favors to the sons of men.



Richard Gutstadt

A heterogeneous population of Orientals, Hawaiians and Europeans mix with the Americans upon usually even terms. Of a population of 125,000, approximately 15,000 Caucasians mingle with an overwhelming majority of Japanese, Chinese, and, in small quantity, native Hawaiians.

Here, in this languorous environment, some 75 Jewish families have been residents, some of them for as long as 50 years. Isolated from Jewish contact, the current of Jewish travel, and the mainstream of Jewish thought and activity, there has been a natural consequence of intermarriage, apathy, and indifference. After frequent sporadic but not persistent efforts at Jewish organization, it required but the enthusiasm of one young Jew, one of the most recent additions to the community, to crystallize a sentiment for Jewish cohesion in Honolulu. The information that a B'nai B'rith representative was being sent to survey the conditions and to assist in organization seemed sufficient to arouse a very general community interest.

Several meetings attracted record-breaking attendances, and strange indeed was the interest of non-Jewish people in the new Jewish effort. On the evening of Saturday, March 22, a B'nai B'rith lodge was instituted with 50 charter members, and a women's auxiliary with 30 charter members. Men who had not been known by their neighbors as Jews came forward voluntarily, seeking admission into these Jewish ranks. The term inspirational hardly suffices to properly characterize the nature of the event.

The institution of Lodge and Auxiliary is significant, but more transcendental was what immediately followed—an expression from those who had previously demonstrated but little concern, that a religious school and a synagogue were vital needs.

The avidity with which information



on Jewish life was sought; the eagerness to discuss Jewish philanthropic and altruistic accomplishment on the Mainland; the intense interest manifested in the Better Understanding movement and the anti-Defamation program, all these are satisfying indeed to those who labor in the interest of Jewish unity.

Honolulu Jewry, with the birth of Honolulu Lodge No. 1126, B. B., is organized. It is definite in its intention to remain so, and to make of its organization the effective instrument for increased community usefulness and regard. Truly may it be said that if the B'nai B'rith had done little else but to be the agent to reclaim this remnant of Israel; if it had accomplished little else but to bring the solace and the consolation of Jewish philosophy to this small group; the Order still would have done much to merit the appreciation of the body of Israel.

RICHARD E. GUTSTADT,  
Secretary, D. G. L. No. 4.

MEMBERS of American B'nai B'rith lodges who intend to visit Europe this summer are cordially invited by Carlsbad (Germany) Lodge to attend its meetings. The regular summer sessions began May 14, and will be held every Wednesday at 7:30 p. m. at the Glattauer Hotel, Parkstrasse. They will include discussions on various themes as well as entertainment.

Similar meetings will be held at Marienbad on the same nights at the Wallhalla Hotel; while in Franzensbad there will be meetings every Tuesday at 8 p. m. in the Savoy Hotel, beginning June 3.

The following brethren will be glad to help American B'nai B'rith members with information: Robert Schenk, head clerk of the Bohemian Union Bank, Carlsbad; Max Stingl, Leipzig Hotel, Marienbad; and Dr. Josef Zeigner, Berliner Hof, Kirchenstrasse, Franzensbad.

THE first B'nai B'rith convention in England, held recently in London was a great success. There were many visitors present from the provincial lodges; 400 attended the concluding dinner of the convention. The Chief Rabbi of Great Britain, Dr. J. H. Hertz, delivered the sermon at the divine service which ushered in the proceedings. Dr. M. Gaster spoke on "Jewish Problems and the work of the Order"; M. Gordon Liverman, M. P., delivered an address on the qualifications for membership in the B'nai B'rith; and several other prominent persons spoke on significant topics. Dr. Samuel Daiches, President of the District Grand Lodge of Great Britain and Ireland, occupied the chair.

\* \* \*

MORE than 60,000 kronen were spent for charitable purposes since January, 1929, by District Grand Lodge No. 10, Czechoslovakia, according to the treasurer's report at the General Committee meeting.

An informative article on the Jewish merchant by Emil Pollak appeared in a recent issue of the B'NAI B'RITH MAGAZINE for Czechoslovakia. It shows statistically that the Jews have been affected more than other peoples by the gradual decline in importance of the Jewish merchant and manufacturer during the last few centuries.

\* \* \*

"THERE ought to be a voluntary Jewish Peace Tax," declared Professor Albert Einstein at a mass meeting in Berlin under the auspices of the Jewish Peace League. Thousands were turned away from the meeting because the Academy of Music, where the meeting was held, was filled.

The B'nai B'rith Grand Lodge of Germany has recently joined the Jewish Peace League.

\* \* \*

A COMPLIMENTARY banquet for the members and wives of Carmel Lodge No. 674, Bulgaria, was held after an enthusiastic initiation of 10 candidates in an "Alfred M. Cohen Class" recently.

The lodge has had several important parts of the B'nai B'rith Manuscript translated into Bulgarian for the delectation of lodge members there.



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# Our Readers Have Their Say

(Note: Letters from our readers are not necessarily printed in full. Our aim is to convey the substance of the thought expressed in the communications. Moreover, for the sake of clarity, we take the liberty of editing letters which we publish. We invite inquiries on matters of a public nature and will be glad to answer them whenever possible.—Editor.)

## Two Letters

Sir:

"Crime and the Jew," in your March, 1930, issue, raises an interesting subject upon which I, and many others, would like to read a sensible discussion both in support and refutation of Judge Cayton's hypothesis.

The article by Mr. Portner is simply ridiculous as regards accusations (1) and (2). To state there is no crime wave, and to prove (?) it by figures from one penitentiary from the most corrupt state in the Union is the height of insincerity. And that penitentiary, to make it worse, is in the district containing the most corrupt city in the country, with the possible exception of Chicago. Figures on commitment to prison in Philadelphia will certainly be the nearest approach to zero attainable in the minds of residents of the rest of the country, "backward" though they may be according to Pennsylvania's junior senator.

But even Mr. Portner's own figures betray him. One naturally supposes that the negroes have had the least political and legal resources, so they comprise 60 per cent of your felons. Then the Jews comprise  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of the total, or 9 per cent of the white inmates in Pennsylvania prisons. How does this compare with the white population of the state? Why will the percentage of Jews committed to prison from a metropolitan city be larger than from other areas, as Mr. Portner says is "natural"?

Please do not think I try to disparage my own people. It is merely that this silly type of "proof" is often told to us to convince us that we are considerably better in one respect or another than our neighbors. Let us have straight, sensible, tenable proof and argument; let us know the truth, good or bad; and let us quit imitating the ostrich by hiding our eyes from the truth, if it should be bad. Then we can set about to right the condition, instead of merely shouting "We do not know, but we do not believe it, and will not find out!"

Portland, Ore. D. SOLIS COHEN, Jr.

A copy of this letter was sent to Mr. Portner for answer, which follows.—Editor.

First, as to the crime wave, I have tried with statistics to show that there is no general crime wave, and may I add further, that our prominent criminologists, who have made a special study of this problem, assert unequivocally that there is no crime wave. I do not deny that during a certain period since the war more crimes were committed, but that cannot be attributed to an aptitude for the commission of crime, but rather an aftermath of war and due to economic depression, which fact I tried to make clear in my article.

As to my reference to the percentages relating to our Jewish criminal population, I furnished the statistics as they exist in Pennsylvania, a state which, next to New York, has the largest Jewish population in America. Other states have their own statistics. In New York, for instance, the Jewish delinquency amounts to about 10 per cent of the entire criminal population. Today I received information that at the Ohio State Penitentiary, out of 5,000 men there are 50 Jews. I do

not know what the entire population is of the state of Ohio, but in Cleveland alone there are 100,000 Jews, making the percentage of the Jewish criminal population almost negligible.

The statistics which I feel are more convincing than any others are those taken from institutions maintained by the U. S. government. These show that in 1928 at the Atlanta Penitentiary there were received 149 Jews out of a total of 2,621 persons; in Leavenworth, 70 Jews out of a total of 2,581; at McNeil Island, 12 out of 655; and at the Chillicothe Reformatory, 11 out of 490. These cover a vast area and expanse of territory and serve as the best means of discovering just what the percentage is of the Jews as compared with the general criminal population in almost every conceivable corner of the United States.

Reference was made to Philadelphia and Chicago being so corrupt that many, as a result, escaped punishment of the law. Should that be true, if the Jew escapes punishment because of political conditions that prevail in these cities, surely those not of our faith are just as fortunate.

Regarding the elimination of the negro population at the Pennsylvania institutions, which would tend to increase the percentage of Jewish delinquency, may I state that there is very little difference in the percentage between the white people and the negro as regards representation by counsel at the time of trial. If we eliminate them, naturally we must eliminate them from the entire population of our state. On that basis our percentage in the state would be about  $6\frac{1}{2}$  or 7. This would not be fair to the Jewish residents of Pennsylvania because a substantial number of Jewish inmates come from other sections, attracted by possibilities which a city like Philadelphia holds out, as compared with smaller towns. Therefore, if we eliminate the negro we should, in justice to our resident population, eliminate these Jewish outsiders, and in the end I do not think we would find much difference from the figures I gave in my article.

Reference was made in the article regarding the percentage of crimes committed by the Jew in a metropolitan city as compared with the western states, predicated on the fact that the percentage of our Jewish population in the western states is much smaller. As an illustration, our entire population is close to 5,000,000 in the United States, and in the three cities of New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia alone, there are over half that number of Jews.

As I stated before, it is natural and self-evident that where more people are there will be more crime. In the aggregate, however, if we take the larger percentage of crime committed by the Jew in the metropolitan areas and the smaller percentage that exists in other parts of the country, we will find that the crimes committed by those of our faith are not out of proportion to the entire population, because they are less than 4 per cent.

It was not, nor will it ever be my purpose to whitewash certain conditions, if they exist. But there is no reason why the situation should be aggravated by one who is not acquainted with all the facts, singularizing us as a group having a crime wave, and that out

of proportion to the general population. The actual facts supported unequivocally by existing conditions obtained not from hearsay but by tenable proofs, do not bear out that contention.

WILLIAM PORTNER.

Philadelphia, Pa.

\* \* \*

## Few Jews in Southern Prisons

Sir:

Some time ago in one of our eastern cities a Jewish judge, Cayton by name, made this statement in a public address that Jewish criminality was on the increase.

His statement aroused a storm of protest and I am glad that through the work of our District Social Service Committee, we are able certainly so far as the south is concerned, to make vigorous denial of the accusation. Our survey this year shows that out of 12 institutions for delinquent boys and girls with a total population of over 2,500, there are but four of the Jewish faith, and in seven penitentiaries with a population of about 15,000 inmates there are but 36 Jews. Furthermore, our survey of the last three years shows that there has been no appreciable increase in the number of Jewish men, women, and children who are incarcerated in reformatories, industrial schools and penitentiaries.

RABBI E. W. LEIPZIGER,

Chairman, Social Service Committee,

District No. 2

\* \* \*

## Favorable Comment

Sir:

On my various visits throughout the District I have discussed the B'NAI B'RITH MAGAZINE with quite a few people and you may be interested in knowing that a great many members, especially in the small towns, are regular readers of the Magazine and are very much impressed with it. Some in fact are frank in saying that they never attend lodge meeting but feel that the Magazine keeps them in touch with B'nai B'rith activities and Jewish affairs and that it is a very welcome visitor in their homes.

I got these same expressions from so many that I feel that they represent a good response to the value of the publication and that you would be glad to hear it. I have always been convinced of it but it is reassuring to get such favorable comment, especially from members who are indifferent to lodge attendance.

SAMUEL I. SIEVERS,

President, District No. 1.

\* \* \*

## Praises "Diplomacy" Article

Sir:

I have just concluded reading the article by Mr. Leon Spitz entitled "Jews in America: Diplomacy" published in the February issue of the B'NAI B'RITH MAGAZINE. I read the article with deep interest. There has been, believe, comparatively little written on this subject. Mr. Spitz's article therefore is a substantial contribution to a very useful field of information.

LOUIS JAMES ROSENBERG.

Detroit, Michigan.



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*Above is the picture of the Hudson stores designed by Smith, Hinchman and Grylls, Engineers and Architects.*

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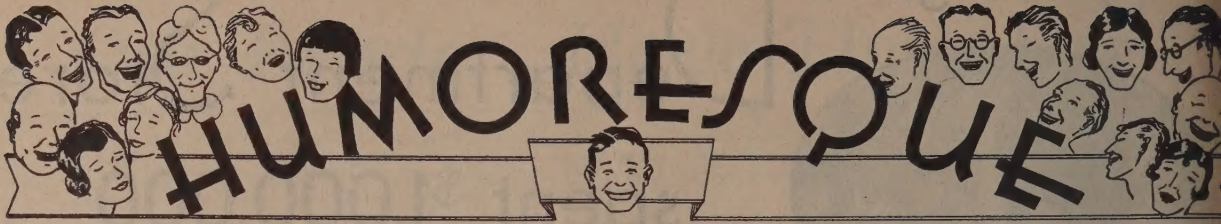
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### Justice

MENDELSSON, the owner of a bakery shop, catered to Jewish trade. One day Teitelbaum came in and asked for a loaf of bread. Mendelsson placed a loaf on the counter, saying it cost 15 cents.

"It isn't the right weight," said Teitelbaum doubtfully, holding it.

"That doesn't matter," responded the baker, grinning. "It will be easier to carry."

Teitelbaum laid a dime on the counter and began to walk out with the bread.

"Hold on!" cried Mendelsson, "that isn't enough money."

"It doesn't matter," retorted the customer, "it will be easier to count."

\* \* \*

### Modesty

MR. BLOOM had had a hard day, collecting money for charity. When he came to Mr. Bomberg's office he was already pessimistic and didn't expect a cent from the wealthy man. What was his surprise when Mr. Bomberg immediately wrote a check for a staggeringly large amount. Mr. Bloom walked out with the check, rejoicing, but returned in a moment.

"Excuse me, sir," he stammered, "but you forgot to sign the check."

"Yes," answered Mr. Bomberg, deprecatingly. "You see, I prefer to remain anonymous."

\* \* \*

### As Good As Any

A JEWISH traveling salesman, who was in a small Colorado town for the first time, was intrigued when he met one of his Jewish customers named N. U. Ferguson.

"How does it happen," he inquired, "that you, a Jew, are named Ferguson?"

"Well," replied the customer, "when I applied for naturalization papers, the clerk couldn't seem to understand me when I told him my name, which was Wiszkminkowicz. After asking me several times to repeat it, he finally shook his head and was silent. I grew exasperated, and shouted, 'Nu, Ferguson?' and that's what he put down."

### Encore Chelm

THE parents of Avrum, according to custom, took their son to the home of the bride they had chosen for him, so that he could meet his future parents-in-law. Since they were residents of Chelm, they thought it might be better were Avrum to maintain silence so that his hosts should not guess how stupid he was. He closely followed instructions and kept his mouth shut during the entire interview.

"He is not very clever," whispered the bride's mother to her husband.

"Mother!" cried Avrum, overhearing her. "They know the truth; now I can talk!"

*THE three lucky persons whose jokes are printed on this page this month, and who therefore have won a handsome new book a-piece, are: Mrs. Boris Brutskus, Berlin, Germany; Rita Haas, Sacramento, Cal.; and M. M. Shuster, Kittanning, Pa.*

### Versatile, if Nothing Else

ABIE, a young bank apprentice, was given, as one of his first duties, a cash book to balance. He worked on it diligently for several hours and then brought it to the boss.

"Here," he said proudly, "I have added it up ten times."

"Good boy!" approved the boss.

"And here," added Abie, "are the ten results."

\* \* \*

### The Chameleon

"I THINK, madam," Mr. Rosenberg, the furrier, said to his customer, "that this fine coat fits you wonderfully. It especially blends so nicely with your pale complexion."

"But I am not always so pale," the lady protested. "It was the price of the coat that suddenly changed my color."

### A Perfect Defense

JUDGE: You are accused of having stolen a suit of clothes. What have you to say?

Moishe: The coat did not fit me; the trousers are too short; the vest is too large.

\* \* \*

### What a Life!

TWO Jews from Galicia, on a trip to Vienna, visited the historic Jewish cemetery in that city. They were overwhelmed with the grandeur and beauty of many of the monuments they saw there.

"Look!" Shmerl enviously remarked to his companion, "how some people live!"

\* \* \*

### Page Candide!

THE doctor was complimenting Mr. Weinstein on his speedy recovery from a serious illness.

"I owe my recovery," agreed Mr. Weinstein, "to my strict observance of the instructions on the medicine you prescribed for me."

"And what particular instruction are you referring to?" beamed the doctor.

"Keep the bottle always tightly closed!" was the answer.

\* \* \*

### A Question of Quantity

HYMIE: I met that impossible Solomon today.

Wife: Yes, and I suppose you argued with him until you were black in the face.

Hymie: No, dear, just around one eye.

\* \* \*

### Incredible

LITTLE Abie Isaacs always looked forward to Christmas as the most joyous and profitable holiday of the year. The reason was simple; all his friends and the parents of his friends would send him many gifts that time. One Christmas, when he had attained the age of five, after lightly examining his gifts, he turned to his father and gravely asked:

"Daddy, do the Gentiles have Christmas, too?"